

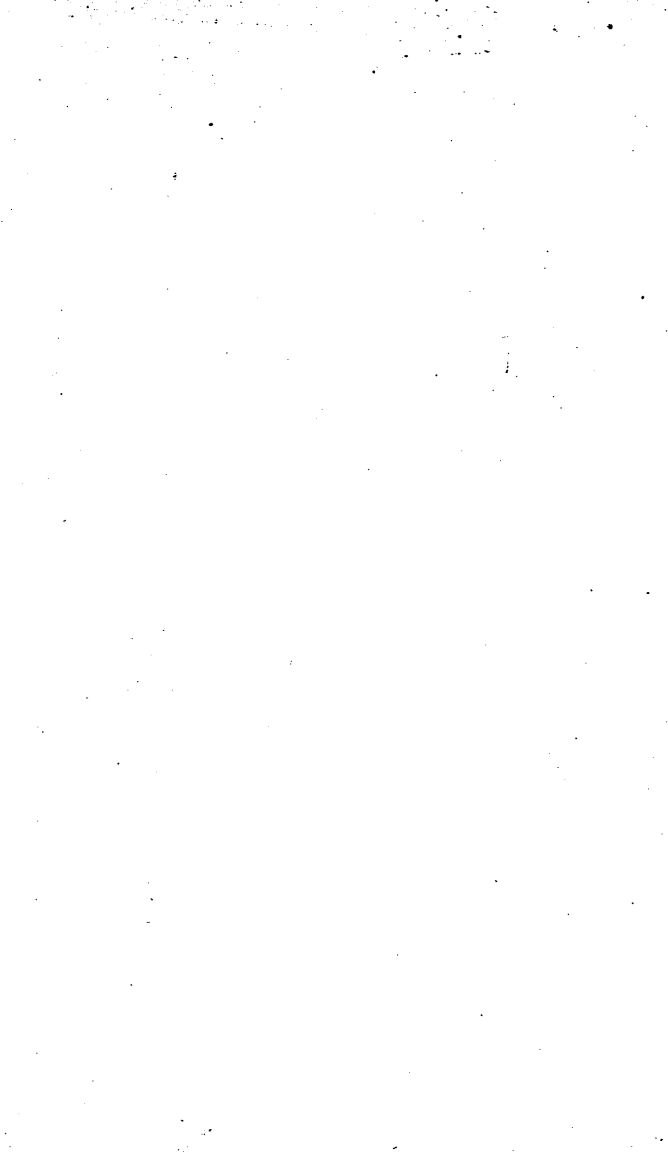
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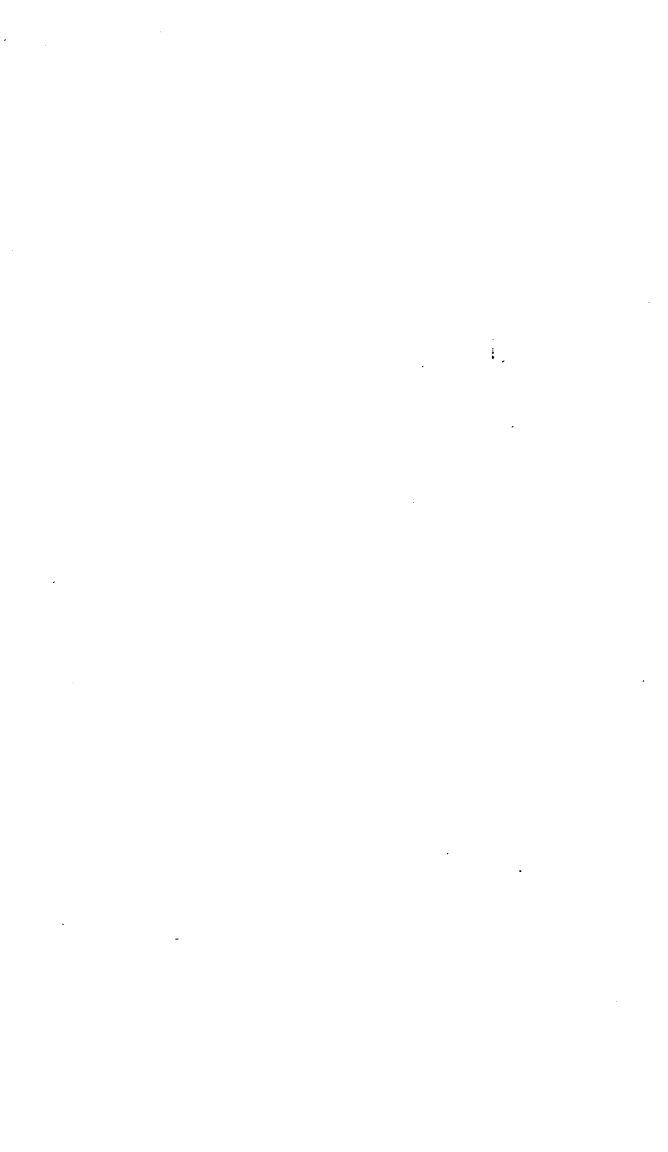


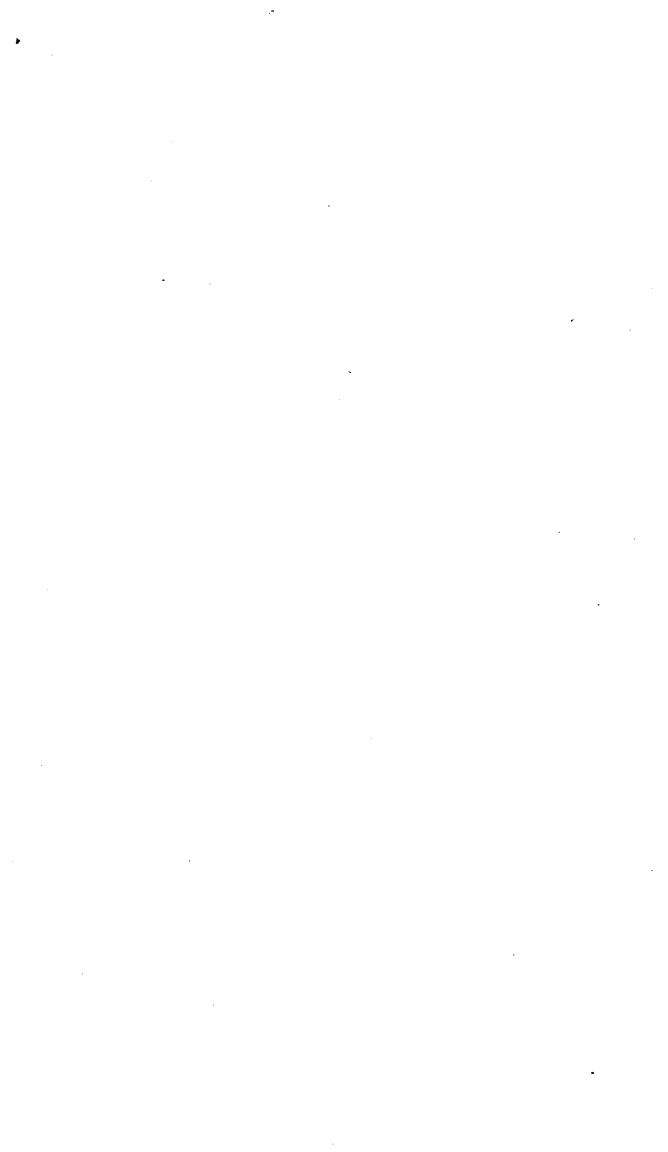
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THE FAITH AND CONDUCT OF A CHURCHMAN

by

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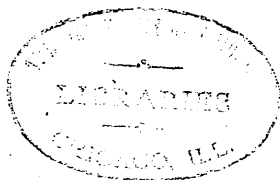
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PREFACE

THE Oxford Centenary will be occupying the thoughts of the best Churchpeople for some time to come. Old names of its heroes will be recalled and the brave days be relived in imagination. We do well to honour them. Many of them deserve to rank with the Confessors and Martyrs of the early years of the Church. On the foundations so well and truly laid by them we hope to bring the Church of England, along with the Churches in all parts of the world in communion with it, to the full enjoyment of its Catholic heritage. There have been dark days in our past history as there have been in the story of every part of the Catholic Church; but on the whole we have just cause to be proud of our spiritual Mother, who amid domestic and political upheavals has by the grace of God preserved all the essentials of the Body of Christ, has proclaimed the Gospel message in its power and purity, has upheld a singularly high ideal of conduct, has set forth a form of religion which maintains admirably the poise the Creator surely desires of the various aspects of our nature—reason, the affections, the will; and, while con-

fident of her own credentials, has always been ready to recognize the fruits of the Spirit in other Christians.

But, after all, the most important thing is that those who think thus of their Church should be practising the Catholic life as well as holding the Faith. Many little books are being issued dealing with special subjects; but in this volume I have endeavoured to cover the whole Faith and Practice of a Catholic. What we are concerned with is to demonstrate that we can live a full-blooded Catholicism in our own Communion. No longer do we go about apologizing for our position. We deplore as much as any the divisions of Christendom. We acknowledge very humbly the faults of ourselves and our forefathers. We pray as earnestly as any for the reunion of the Church. But we should be hypocrites if we refused to see the hand of God in our past and present, and equally if we were to acquiesce in a mere toleration of our position as Catholics in the Church of England. We desire to convert England. We labour and pray for the time when every altar shall be in daily use, when every communicant shall be a penitent, when all shall have the hearts of missionaries, when our people shall manifest their Churchmanship in

every department of our social and industrial life and when in the appointment of our Bishops and all the ordering of our worship there will be no more attempts at interference by a State no longer even nominally Christian in the case of many of its rulers.

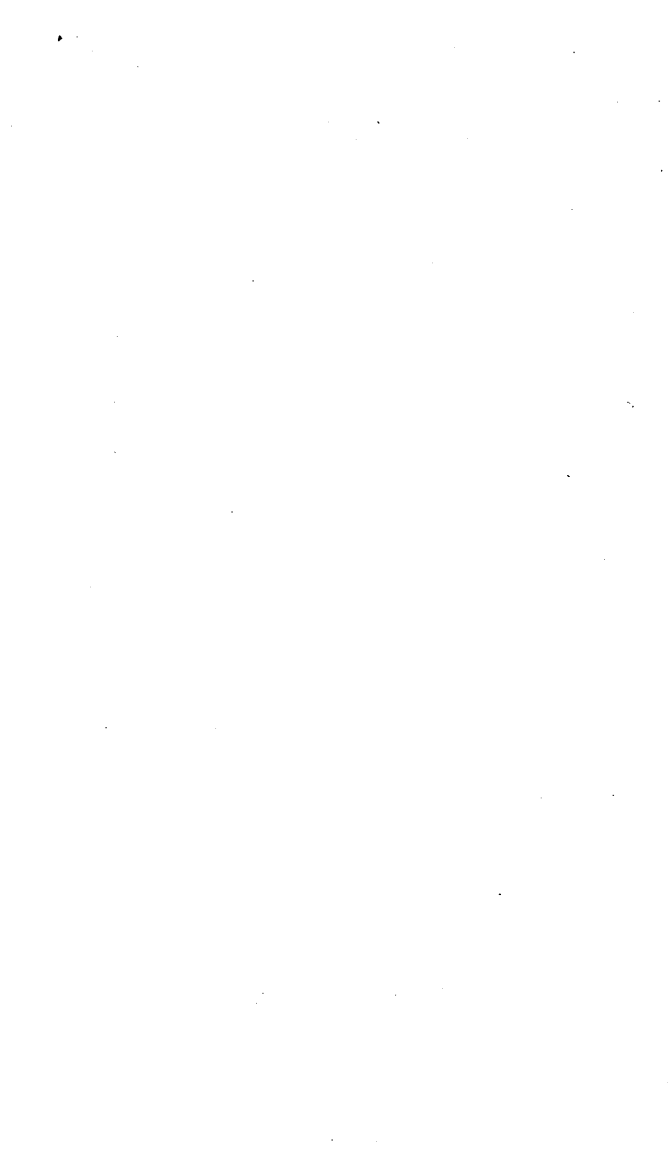
The books on which I have founded the teaching given here are the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, taking into consideration the fact of the recognition in the latter of the common Catholic inheritance which the compilers of the Book had no wish to repudiate. Through the darkest days of our Church's story there has always been the thin red line of those who have bravely maintained the true Faith and Practice of Catholics; to them we cannot be too grateful. It is our part now by our example to commend these to a nation and world perishing for want of Vision. Only on a Catholic basis can the affairs of our land and the world be well and truly adjusted.

It is my humble hope that this little book may help to so great an end. Perhaps it may prove of use in the preparation of candidates for Confirmation and First Communion and also in enabling earnest people to grasp more clearly the fundamental truths of our holy Faith. I

have written out of many years of experience. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to others who led me to embrace the truth. It would be a real joy to think that I had been able to assist some others in the greatest quest in life.

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THE FAITH AND CONDUCT OF A CHURCHMAN

I

THE SPIRIT OF OBEDIENCE

YOU will note in your Prayer Books that January 1st is set down as the day to be observed as a Feast in honour of the Circumcision of Our Lord, the octave day of His Birthday, Christmas. Let that supply me with an opening theme. The Feast presents Our Lord, the Supreme God in human flesh, as beginning His life by subjecting Himself to the law, and that in a manner most painful to the flesh. The ceremony stood for an admission into a covenant with God, for a sign of the cleansing required by mankind, for a token of certain obligations in virtue of membership in a specific body. Our Lord entered all humanity and was in Himself the Covenant, God and Man at one for ever. He needed no cleansing, for He had His human nature from a spotless Virgin. He was Himself to be the Law of the regenerate Jewish Society, viz. the Holy Catholic

Church. Yet here, an Infant of eight days, He submits Himself painfully to a passing law of the far from perfect Jewish Church.

Now we find as the Church's Year unfolds before our eyes that what was begun at His Circumcision was carried out consistently through His life. He accepts freely and gladly the obligations of the Jews. His ransom is paid at His Presentation in the Temple. He pays the Temple tax. He frequents regularly ("as His custom was") the Sabbath services in the synagogues. He keeps the great feasts at Jerusalem after being made a "Son of the law" at twelve years of age. He observes the fasts of the people, else certainly His omission of these would have been brought up as a charge against Him. He urges attention to those who sit in Moses' seat, the appointed teachers. On the very eve of His Passion He is seen going up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of the Passover. He is no "free-lancer." He chastizes hypocrisy and mere observance of the letter accompanied by neglect of the spirit; but He does fulfil all His obligations as a Jew.

The general lesson I wish to emphasize will already be obvious. As baptized into the Covenant Society, the Holy Catholic Church, we are all under grave obligations, and we must sensibly

and resolutely face the proposition: "To neglect these obligations is a serious sin against God Who founded this Society by His Only-Begotten Son Jesus Christ, and gave the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to guide it in its ways."

Look at the matter from a common-sense point of view. (1) Every society amongst men has its rules and obligations. To be disloyal to them is to break up the society. (2) Every human relationship has obligations necessary for its perfection, e.g. the relationship of husband and wife, parent and child. (3) All business life rests on the acceptance and discharge of obligations.

Now consider the Catholic Church, of which the Church of England claims definitely to be a part. (1) It is a Society founded by God Himself, but composed of men and women with all their various characteristics: it must have rules and obligations, not simply some odd practices chosen by the individual. (2) To be in the Church is to be in relationship with God and Man, and implies certain obligations to both. (3) The Church has a business, to commend salvation to all the world and to bring all men to God in loyal service. The business begins with self, with the discipline of the body and soul, bringing both

into subjection by the means laid down by the Society.

Consider. Baptism is administered only on the recognition of obligations, on the part of the baptized to renounce evil, to keep the faith, to obey the commandments, and the Church lays on godparents the obligation of seeing that the baptized is *brought* to the Lord's Service and *brought* to be confirmed.

Holy Communion is administered only to those who have been confirmed or are minded to be confirmed at the first opportunity.

Marriage is allowed only to those fulfilling certain conditions and undertaking certain very grave obligations.

These are instances at random, to illustrate the general truth that the Church recognizes no kind of free-lance or do-as-you-please religion.

The faithful are under authority in all matters settled by the laws of the Church. There is a "law" of worship definitely implied in the Book of Common Prayer, namely, attendance at the Holy Communion every Sunday, and on certain great Festivals, like Christmas and Ascension Day. There is a "law" of Fasting and Abstinence clearly stated in the Prayer Book, for all Fridays and certain other days. That Fasting has a tech-

nical meaning, and does not mean keeping as you like the Friday, is clear from the word *Abstinence* placed beside it, for Abstinence has only one meaning in Church phrase, namely, eating no flesh-meat of any kind.

There is a "law" that if a man wants to receive Holy Communion he must seek Confirmation. There is a "law" that a man must not marry a party to a divorce action.

Meantime, I have just summarized a few "laws," but the point I want to make is this: the Church of England asks loyalty of all her members and the loyalty will be lovingly and gladly given, with no sense of being tyrannized over, by everyone who thinks the matter out with prayer and common sense. Everything in life worth having must be orderly. The choice is order and life or chaos and death.

All of this is connected with the Discipline of the Church, which from the very start was of such moment, as any reader of the Acts or the Epistles can easily discover. No adjective is less complimentary as applied to any person than "undisciplined." The clergy are under special obligation to maintain the Discipline of the Church.

I feel sure that the thoughtful will want to

make a resolve—"I will try to live a more disciplined life in the Church and in the world." Yes, he will rejoice to follow the example of Christ, of Blessed Mary, of the Holy Apostles and the saints, in pleasing not himself—rejoice especially when he finds it difficult and involving sacrifice of personal predilections and mere wilfulness, remembering Him Who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, Who lived in loyalty to the Jewish Church, Who died in obedience to the law of the Father's love: rejoice, in a word, to find himself in the Society which proclaims as the first rule of membership, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and follow Me."

II

HOLY BAPTISM, THE SACRAMENT OF INITIATION

THE Sacrament most nearly concerned with Easter is perhaps Holy Baptism. One Easter Eve some years ago I dropped into a church for a moment of prayer and saw a number of people at the Font and the priest pouring water over the head of each three times as he said, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The priest had evidently taught his people about that being the great day for Baptism, coming between the day kept in memory of the Lord's death (Good Friday) and Easter Day, the memorial of His Resurrection. The idea is of being baptized into the Death of Christ so as to receive the benefit of His Sacrifice (the remission of sin), and also into the "power of His Resurrection" (grace to serve Him in a new life in this world with the hope of sharing in "the resurrection of the blessed").

1. The word "Baptism" means washing. The Jews had several "baptisms," practised to band men together for special purposes, in guilds, etc.

The best known is that of St. John the Baptist, his baptized being a company of people repenting of their sins and looking for the open appearance of the Messiah, God's Saviour of His people.

2. To St. John's Baptism one day came Jesus, not repenting, for He had no sin, but to institute the Christian Sacrament of Baptism and "sanctify water for the mystical washing away of sin." The Father was manifested by the voice from heaven ("This is My Beloved Son"), the Son in the Man standing to be baptized, the Holy Ghost in the beam of light sweeping down dove-like to abide on Christ. The connection with the words now used at Baptism is significant—"in the name of the Father, etc."

3. A little later Nicodemus, a learned ruler of the Jews, asked how he could enter "the Kingdom," Our Lord replied that he must be "born again (from above) of water and the Holy Ghost." Only Baptism satisfies this condition of entrance into "the Kingdom" (which, broadly speaking, is represented on earth by the Church). There is to be an outward application of water, with an inward process of cleansing and renewal by the Holy Spirit. "Regeneration" is a good term for this, signifying being begotten again by Divine Love, cleansed and brought into the Father's

special family, the Church, having a covenanted claim on God for spiritual help, a new relationship to fellow-members, living and departed, and new responsibilities to God and man.

4. In sending forth the Apostles, Jesus bade them "make disciples of *all* men, baptizing and teaching."

5. In Acts ii St. Peter says in the first sermon preached after the coming of the Holy Spirit, "Be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins." In Acts xxii, Saul of Tarsus is commanded to "be baptized and wash away his sins." It is the universal rule.

6. St. Peter (1 Pet. iii) teaches that "Baptism doth now save us . . . by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ," not by washing our flesh but our souls, and uniting us to the Risen Christ.

7. St. Paul in his thirteen Epistles refers at least forty-seven times to baptism, the best known passage being Romans vi. There he teaches that in the Baptismal Font we are buried with Christ, our sins being washed off and, as it were, left in His Tomb; but also a new germ of life is implanted in us as we rise united to the Risen Jesus, new creatures, sharers of His life.

8. This universal custom of Baptism and the teaching about it is continued in the Church.

The Prayer Book has many references, e.g.:

(1) *Catechism*. "In Baptism . . . made a member (a living part) of Christ, the child of God (born into His Family, the Church), an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven (a present possessor of the spiritual privileges appointed by Our Lord)." Further, the baptized receive "a death unto sin, and a new-birth unto righteousness."

(2) *The Baptismal Service*. We are taught to pray that in the Sacrament the person to be baptized "may be regenerate," "may receive what by nature he cannot have," "may be washed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost," "may receive remission of sin(s)," may have the old man buried and the new man raised up in him, may obtain strength and power to conquer the devil, the world and the flesh, may receive the fullness of grace. Further, after the Baptism, we are told to give thanks because the baptized is now regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church, and proceed to thank God for "having regenerated the baptized with His Holy Spirit, receiving him for His own child by adoption and incorporating him into His Holy Church."

9. I have quoted thus largely to show the great importance attaching to Baptism in the Scriptures and the Prayer Book. I am sure we lose very much by our casual way of dealing with and thinking of this Sacrament, the beginning of our Christian life. The place of the Font at the church door has a significance that should be dwelt on: here is the door of the Church.

10. *Why is Baptism necessary?*

(1) Because the Lord appointed it for all men.

(2) Because it has always been the custom of the Church.

(3) Because every person brings into the world a heritage of mingled good and of an evil for which a Divine remedy is required.

11. Dwell on the third reason. God made man innocent, with power to rise uninterruptedly into fitness for perfect union with, and service of, Him. To reach perfection man had to be tested and tried. Genesis gives us a picture of the trial. With deliberation man, through pride and unregulated desire, disobeyed God and "fell," i.e. he forfeited certain gifts of grace bestowed on him, and became a creature of sinful habits, rebellious desires and dim vision of spiritual

things. Children inherit from their parents, and thenceforward each child came into the world with a partially crippled nature. God supplied sufficient help to all who would use it; but when the time was ripe did more, far more. God the Son came and took our nature of the Blessed Virgin Mary, lived on earth a life of perfect holiness, in obedience to His great calling faced and found a cruel death on Calvary, offered to the Father as new Head of our humanity a Sacrifice of perfect obedience and love, big enough to atone for all the deficiencies of the race and took each person so entirely to His great heart of love as to feel their sins as His own—yes, so that His heart was broken in the process: here was a sorrow for sin big enough for the whole world, possible only because He was God the Son in human flesh.

When He rose, accepted and triumphant, men shared His atoning work in the first instance by being joined to Him in Baptism. The union established is so close as to be described as being made a part of His Body, or as being grafted into Him, the “True Vine.”

12. We might use for an illustration the operation of transfusion of blood, in which into a person, with blood scant and in an impure

condition, is conveyed from a healthy person sufficient healthy blood to cleanse away the impurities and bring new life. Spiritually in Baptism we are so united to Christ that His Blood, which is His life, comes into our natures to wash away the stain of sin and to give us power to serve God "in newness of life."

13. Infants are soiled by their inheritance, but not guilty. Yet, just as we wash infants' bodies, dirty through no fault of their own, so ought we to have their souls washed. They have a weak nature too, and we should secure the strength of Christ for them at the earliest moment. Our Lord by blessing little children showed them capable of receiving a blessing. People of riper years baptized will have also many actual transgressions of which to repent and be cleansed. They will need to come with personal faith that God will fulfil for them the promises of His own sacrament.

14. Great as are the privileges of Baptism, equally great are the responsibilities. It is the special duty of godparents to secure that these responsibilities are brought home to the baptized and that Confirmation should follow in due course. It is a deadly, yet common, error for men to believe that the vows of Baptism are not of

obligation for them till they are confirmed. Some refuse to be confirmed for this reason, thus adding the sin of disobedience and contempt of God's ordinance to their other sins. ALL the baptized are bound (*a*) to renounce and fight against the powers of evil, whether of evil spiritual beings, of evil example and influence of those around them, or of the urge of their badly regulated desires; (*b*) to learn and hold the teachings of Christ in His Church, shortly contained in the Creed; and (*c*) to discover and keep God's holy will and commandments by the use of prayer, conscience, grace and listening to the teaching of Holy Church.

15. Godparents are bound to see that young children are brought to the Lord's Own Service, the Holy Communion, for it is then that the Prayer Book provides for a sermon ("ye shall call upon him to hear sermons").

16. Generally speaking, in Baptism we are received into the great Family of which Our Lord Himself is the Head; we share His life; we are called to live worthy of our membership; and in particular are bound to take our full share in the worship and service of the Church Catholic, Christ's mystical Body.

I have written thus fully, though in condensed

form, of the Sacrament of initiation into the Church, that all who read may be stirred up to thank God for their own baptismal share in the Triumph of Jesus Risen, may ponder afresh their responsibilities within the Christian Family and their duty to bring others to the "new birth," and may assist by example, influence and teaching in the home in bringing up for the glory of God the baptized children committed to our care.

I conclude with the words of an old Scottish divine, a "Paraphrase":

When to the sacred font we came,
 Did not the rite proclaim
 That, dead to sin and all its stains,
 New creatures we became?
 With Christ the Lord we died to sin,
 With Him to life we rise,
 To life which, now begun on earth,
 Is perfect in the skies.

III

CONFIRMATION, THE COMPLETION OF BAPTISM

AT Whitsuntide our hearts and minds are specially filled with thoughts of the wonderful coming of the Spirit of the Father and the Son to carry on in the Church the work of Jesus' redemption, mercy and grace. Our Lord completed His earthly ministry by offering Himself on Calvary and rising again from the dead; but it was necessary that His redemption should be applied to us. So, when He had ascended, His Spirit was sent upon the Church. It is the Holy Spirit Who makes effectual each of the sacraments; but one of them is pre-eminently connected with the thought of Him, and that is Confirmation.

It is a strange and sad fact that nowadays most people one meets do not even know what Confirmation is. Well, to begin in the simplest way, it is a very solemn service of the Church for the benefit of all baptized people, who have not been already confirmed, who have been instructed about God, the Church and a Chris-

tian's duty, who know the difference between right and wrong, who are earnestly minded to obey and serve God, and who have sought and found the pardon of their sins. These are brought to kneel before a Bishop, who, after praying God to bestow on them the sevenfold gift of the Holy Ghost, lays his hands on their heads as a sign of the actual coming to them *then and there* of the Holy Spirit to strengthen them.

Now let us see what authority there is for this service, which is "commonly called a sacrament." We believe it was appointed by Our Lord through His Apostles. He had promised that, when He went away, He would send His Spirit and that the Spirit would "comfort" them (i.e. make them strong) and lead them into all truth. At Pentecost, fifty days after Easter, the Holy Ghost came down with outward signs of fire and wind (Acts ii). During the forty days between the Resurrection and Ascension Jesus had often appeared to the Apostles and taught them many things about His Church. What those things were we gather from their actions. Some of these actions were employed everywhere and continue to be employed to this day, among them, Baptism, the laying on of hands in Confirmation, and the Holy Communion. In Acts

viii. 12-17, we read of St. Philip, the deacon, preaching in Samaria, and baptizing, and then, to complete the work begun in Baptism, sending for the Apostles Peter and John. These came down and "laid their hands" on the baptized, who thereupon received the Holy Ghost. In Acts xix. 1-6, we find St. Paul in like manner "laying on his hands," and the Holy Ghost is given. We note other references, e.g. 2 Corinthians i. 21, 22; Ephesians i. 13; Titus iii. 5; 1 John ii. 20, 27. There is no doubt that it was the mind of God that the Apostles, and those who succeeded them, should thus "confirm," i.e. lay on hands with prayer, in order that all might receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit's gifts.

Space is wanting to quote history, but it is abundantly evident that the use of Confirmation was from the first universal and that it was continued everywhere in the Church just as regularly as Baptism. At first (as at least very many of the baptized, having just lately been converted from heathenism or Judaism, would be adults), Confirmation would be given immediately after Baptism; this is still the practice of the Eastern Churches. Later in the West (to which we belong), it was postponed till children came to "years of discretion"—that is, became

able to discern between right and wrong, and could be held responsible for their conduct, seven years being the age generally contemplated.

Our Prayer Book directs godparents to see that their godchildren are *brought* to be confirmed: there is no idea of waiting till young people make up their own minds to come. The evident intention is that, as soon as the strain of temptation begins to be felt, the child should be fortified by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. I carry on from this point in short paragraphs, each worth pondering.

1. The Holy Spirit brings special gifts in Baptism, namely, cleansing and a share in Christ's life. In Confirmation He brings further gifts of spiritual strength to enable us to fight against temptation and do God's will.

2. We need such strength, because (a) in ourselves is a will weakened by sin; (b) our enemies ("the world, the flesh and the devil") are very strong; and (c) it is all important that we should gain the victory in the Big Battle for Christ's Kingdom.

3. The name of the Sacrament gives us its meaning, Con-firm-a-tion, i.e. being made strong with the Holy Ghost.

4. We are helped to understand how Our

Lord can give us His Spirit by simple illustrations like these: (a) Alfred the Great put his spirit into his followers and they defeated the Danes. (b) I have seen a captain of a tug-of-war team and a football captain so lend their spirit to their followers that they defeated naturally stronger and better teams. So Christ can give us His Spirit, not for one effort but for always, to help us to spiritual victory.

5. Confirmation is not something we do for ourselves but something God does for us. We can get ready by learning, by prayer, by self-examination, by confession, by good resolutions; but the gift is of God.

6. The best gift anyone can desire is of a friend who will never leave one. The best earthly friend will sometimes misunderstand, often be unable to help us, often be absent. Confirmation gives us the Heavenly Friend, Who will never misunderstand, Who will always (unless we drive Him out) be with us and Who can always help us.

7. The outward sign of Confirmation is the laying on of hands with prayer (some parts of the Church add anointing). This outward sign (a) is ancient, pointing out a person chosen for office. Each person confirmed is specially chosen

to receive grace and render service. (b) The sign is the natural way of expressing a blessing. (c) It is an imitation of Our Lord's laying His hands on young people to bless them, and the Bishop acts for Christ. (d) It claims the confirmed to be on Christ's side in the great "game" of life.

8. While a quite young child can rightly be confirmed, and wisely so, to strengthen him to overcome evil; yet no unconfirmed person is too old or too good to seek to be confirmed. God helps in many ways those ignorant of sacraments; but, *as soon as anyone knows that Confirmation exists in the Church by Divine intention* to bestow spiritual strength, he is bound to seek for Confirmation; for, if he does not (a) he is not honouring God's appointment, and (b) at least runs grave risk of forfeiting the grace he has enjoyed.

9. In answer to the question, "Ought all Christians to be Confirmed?" one may well answer "yes"; for (a) God appointed this holy rite; (b) it has been the universal custom of the Church from the first; (c) no one can afford to neglect any spiritual help provided for him; (d) it is presumption to expect God to give us His gifts in ways different from His own appointed channels, when these are made known to us.

10. The Prayer Book makes clear the importance of Confirmation: (a) All baptized in the Church are to be brought to the Bishop for Confirmation. (b) No one is to be admitted to Holy Communion save those who have been confirmed or are "ready and desirous to be confirmed" (i.e. will be confirmed at the earliest opportunity).

11. For the fruits of the Spirit, see Galatians v. 22-25.

12. Consider well the prayer in the Confirmation Service which precedes the "laying on of hands" and gives this act its meaning:—

"Almighty and everlasting God, Who hast vouchsafed to regenerate those Thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost" (i.e. at their Baptism, when they were "born from above" into the Father's Family), "and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins" (which is made perfectly sure to those who confess their sins and receive absolution from a priest, "I absolve thee from all thy sins in the name," etc.); "Strengthen them, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter" (the special grace of Confirmation being such strength), "and daily increase in them Thy manifold gifts of grace" (the gifts will be the Friend's help appropriate to every age and need,

and increasing as the years go by and needs and opportunities multiply); "the spirit of wisdom" (to put God always first); "and understanding" (of our holy religion and its mysteries); "the spirit of counsel" (to act wisely, with discretion); "and ghostly strength" (spiritual strength to persevere); "the spirit of knowledge" (of what God would have ME do day by day); "and true godliness" (of growing really like Christ); "and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of Thy holy fear" (the fear of doing anything to wound the Sacred Heart of Jesus); "now and for ever. Amen."

IV

PENANCE, THE SINNER'S HOPE AND COMFORT

DESPITE the grace of Baptism and Confirmation, men still fall into sin: what then?

God in His mercy has provided a universal means of pardon in "the sacrament of Penance" (Confession and Absolution).

1. *What is "Confession"?* It is the coming of a baptized person to a priest or Bishop, usually in church, to tell out in his hearing to God the sins of his whole life since his baptism, or since his last confession, as far as he remembers them, in order to obtain full pardon and grace to amend. Here is a form drawn up in 1927 by the entire body of Bishops in England: "I confess to God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, that I have sinned in thought, word and deed, through my own grievous fault; wherefore I pray God to have mercy on me. And especially I have sinned in these ways . . ."

2. *What is Absolution?* It is God's free pardon for the sinner who is truly sorry for his sins,

humbly confesses them to his fellow-sinner the priest and is firmly resolved to amend.

Here are the Prayer Book words in which absolution is given by the priest to the penitent sinner: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences; And by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The Church has commonly taught that the sinner who goes to Confession with proper intention receives not only perfect forgiveness but also *special grace from God* to help him to do better for the future.

3. *Is there any authority for this in the Bible?*
Yes, abundant.

(a) In Old Testament times there was a regular system of Confession.

(b) When St. John the Baptist preached repentance to prepare the way for Jesus, the people came to him "*confessing their sins.*"

(c) Our Lord pronounced forgiveness to a "woman who was a sinner" ("Thy sins are forgiven thee: go and sin no more"), and to a palsied man ("Son, thy sins are forgiven thee")

and said, "The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sin."

(d) On the evening of Easter Day, after saying to the Apostles that as the Father had put all authority into His hands, He now handed it on to them ("As the Father sent Me, so now I send you"), He breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit (i.e. forgive), they are remitted (forgiven) unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained (i.e. the impenitent remain bound by sin)" St. John xx. 21-23. (Notice that (a) The Apostles were men who often needed pardon themselves. (b) To know whether they ought to forgive or "retain" sin, they would need to hear from the sinner what his sins were and how he felt about them, i.e. each sinner would need to make Confession.)

(e) In the Epistles of the New Testament we find this power being exercised as part of the regular discipline of the Church.

4. *Did Confession stop at the death of the Apostles?* No. It was continued from the earliest days and exists to-day. Every priest when ordained received power to forgive sins, or to put it otherwise, to apply by Absolution the cleansing of Christ's Blood to the sinner, just as he does when he baptizes.

5. *What has our Prayer Book to say about it? More than any other Prayer Book in the world.*

(a) Christ "hath given *power and commandment* to His Ministers to declare and pronounce to His people being penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their sins" (Morning and Evening Prayer).

(b) (To the priest by a Bishop at Ordination—see "Ordering of Priests")—"Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Priest . . . whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained." (Note again the necessity for private confession for the priest's guidance as to whether he must "remit" or "retain" the sins.)

(c) In the "Visitation of the Sick" the priest is commanded to urge the sick person to make a special confession of his sins if his conscience is troubled. (Surely he is in bad case whose conscience is not troubled by sin when he thinks of standing before the Judgment Seat, and surely he is a fool who puts off confession till his death-bed. Surely also it is assumed that the sick man has been in the habit of going to confession, else it will be difficult to explain to him what is expected of him.)

(d) In one of the Prayer Book exhortations to be read to people preparing to receive Holy Communion, all are moved to make careful self-examination and confession to God, and those whose consciences are troubled are directed to go to a priest ("let him come") and make private confession of their sins that they may receive the benefit of spiritual counsel and absolution so as to be able with a glad mind to come to the altar. Nobody should go on morbidly worrying about his sins; but surely those who realize (a) that God calls every man to be *perfectly like Jesus Christ* in thought, word and deed, (b) that men's sins brought Christ to Calvary, (c) that each has his share in the sins that crucified Christ and broke His Heart, will often have a troubled conscience and be glad to use the benefit of Absolution *left by Jesus Christ Himself* in His Church. He will hereby (a) gladden Our Lord's Heart by joyful acceptance of His provision for pardon and grace, (b) encourage his neighbour to use the same great benefit, and (c) himself receive from God a very special help to amend his life. It is at least rash not to avail oneself of *every* help provided by Our Lord Jesus Christ.

6. Is there anything in our *everyday life* that favours such Confession and Absolution?

Yes; e.g.—(a) The old saying, “Murder will out.” All at times feel the need of a confidant. The Church provides a safe one in her priests, who are strictly bound under Canon Law never to tell anyone directly or indirectly of any sin made known to them in Confession.

(b) Another old saying, “Confession is good for the soul.” The most eminent doctors now tell us how much harm is done by repressing Confession: it poisons a man’s nature and renders him morose and even desperate.

(c) In a family it is recognized that each child who errs grievously owes an apology to the head of the house on the ground of his fault being against the little society of the family circle. The Church is a family, and every sin is in some way an offence against that Divine Society and part of the reparation asked is an apology to the official representative of the Society, God’s priest, for all serious offences.

7. What of *objections* made to the practice? Space fails me to deal with all. Here are some.

(a) “It is used by Roman Catholics.” Yes, so are Baptism, Holy Communion, Confirmation, Marriage, and, one might add, food, clothing and houses. We still continue to eat and drink!

(b) “People go to Confession and quickly fall

into the same sins." Yes, and so also with those who confess their sins to God only; yet they go on every day saying, "Forgive us our trespasses." The real point is that people should be resolved, and trying, to amend.

(c) "It is an unmanly practice." Surely absurd, when we remember brave sailors, soldiers and saints who have used it all their lives.

8. Sum up the *positive arguments* for Confession:—

(a) Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself appointed it.

(b) The greatest saints of every age have used it.

(c) The Prayer Book approves of it and makes it the first charge to newly-ordained priests.

(d) It is an aid to self-examination, contrition, humility and amendment.

(e) It brings a special grace to the penitent.

(f) To use it encourages others to come who have the like need with us of *all* the means of grace given by God.

(g) It only fell out of general use in the Church of England in her very dearest and most evil days.

(h) It is the *harder* way.

(i) The Church of England has not abolished the Sacrament of Penance, but has laid the responsibility for its use on each baptized person.

9. *How often should one come?*

(a) The old custom or law of the Church was that all should come at least every year, preferably before Easter.

(b) We should always come when we have committed serious sins, and "the benefit of doubt" about their seriousness should be given *against* ourselves.

(c) Because we easily grow careless, it would be well that *all* should come before great Festivals (say Christmas, Easter, Whitsunday and the Dedication Festival). The practice of the writer and of very many of his brother priests, people and friends, is to go to Confession monthly; and not a few devout churchpeople have told him of the great help of weekly Confessions. It is well to remember that Penance is *a means of grace*.

10. *How should one prepare?* It is best to secure a "Confession paper," or use one of the many books now obtainable. (Ask a priest about one.) Shortly it might be put thus: Get away by yourself, preferably in a church and before a crucifix. Ask the help of the Holy Spirit. Review

your life by aid of the Commandments, the Beatitudes, the perfect pattern of Christ's life. Think of duties and pleasures, of sins of thought, word and deed, and of *good left undone*. Think of how your conduct has harmed others by way of example or otherwise. Think of unthankfulness for God's mercies, of sloth, anger, greed, slander, or other besetting sins. Think how all this has grieved and is grieving the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Consider how you may amend your life. Use paper and pencil if necessary as an aid to memory at Confession. Make an act of real sorrow for guilt. Then go at a time appointed and confess your sins humbly and faithfully—as your priest in his turn regularly confesses his to a brother priest. Remember that it is a very grievous offence wilfully to conceal any sin at your Confession.

It should be added that it is not advisable to speak of what is said to you by way of counsel except in the most general way.

Each time you make your Confession, you leave your burden, like Christian, at the Foot of the Cross and resume with light heart your Pilgrim's Progress.

V

THE RULE OF WORSHIP, THE HOLY SACRIFICE

IN this chapter I deal with the Rule of Worship; but first let me premise that a good idea of the place of rule in our daily lives is suggested by the expression a *well-regulated* life, as contrasted with the far from complimentary *ill-regulated*. "Well-regulated" means with good rules carefully observed; and let me further say that the motive behind the rules of the Church is love, as indicated in St. Paul's phrase, "The love of Christ constraineth us," i.e. compels us to follow certain rules. Our Lord's highest commendation in the Gospels is given to a certain centurion who said of himself, "I am a man under authority." You see how utterly opposed all this is to the "free-lance" ideas about religion popular among certain types of people of our age, ideas that seek satisfaction in all the curious "isms" and sects of our fretful days.

Well, about the *rule of worship*. Has God appointed any particular times, places and modes in which it is His will that we should worship Him?

1. *Times*.—From the earliest days of the Christian Church the faithful were accustomed to assemble *every* Sunday, or first day of the week, *all* of them together, in all parts of the world where Christ was known, to worship God. The early Fathers of the Church and pagan writers, like Pliny, testify to a like practice. The Book of Common Prayer accepts this rule and custom of all the ages. Besides Sunday, certain other days came in process of time to be regarded as specially holy days, to be marked by the same worship as on Sundays, of which the following are the chief: Christmas, the Feast of the Circumcision (January 1st), the Epiphany (January 6th), Good Friday, Ascension Day, and a few more.

2. *Places*.—As soon as it was possible, that is when Christianity became a tolerated religion, Christians built churches which were solemnly consecrated, and the celebration of the chief Service of the Church was practically restricted to these. So evidently our churches are the common places where worship is to be offered in the regular sense. Of course, you can worship God anywhere, but (a) you cannot offer Him the distinctive worship of the Church, Christ's own Sacrifice, anywhere; (b) nor are people who do not regularly worship God in Church likely to be keen on wor-

shipping Him in odd places; (c) nor is this kind of worship (even in the presence of a "loud speaker"), a substitute for personal attendance before the altar.

3. *Modes*.—Amid much freedom in regard to "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," the Church of God has certain carefully regulated Services. Look at the New Testament for guidance. Our Lord Jesus Christ appointed Himself just one Service, the Holy Communion ("commonly called the Mass"), and laid the observance of it as a dying command on the Apostles and their followers till He should come again. In the three passages where Sunday is referred to in the New Testament the day is marked by the observance of the Holy Communion. Again, the unbroken testimony of the early writers about Christianity shows the same observance. To put it shortly, Christians of those centuries would not have known what you were talking about if you had spoken of keeping the Lord's Day without the Lord's Own Service.

When Christ was preached in Britain the same rule was followed everywhere.

Now look at the Prayer Book. You see there "Morning Prayer," as plainly as possible meant as *an introduction* to the Holy Communion and

not even for all the people. It is taken for granted that *the full congregation* will be assembled for the Holy Communion; for (*a*) there is no sermon set down for Morning Prayer but only for the Holy Communion; (*b*) all notice about Feasts, Fasts, Meetings, etc., and Banns of Marriages are to be made at that Service; (*c*) at that Service the alms are to be collected; (*d*) to that Service sponsors at Baptism are urged to see that their godchildren be taken.

Ask yourself now, as one who loves Our Lord and has read the Gospels, if you had been entrusted with determining what Service should be *the* Service to which the whole body of Christian people should come every Sunday, would you have selected Morning or Evening Prayer (Services which are an amalgamation of certain Services said in old days by monks, and very good in their place); or some unconventional Service of free prayers, Scripture readings, hymns and sermon (also a good Service in its own place); or would you have fixed on the Service (*a*) which Our Lord Himself appointed when on the very eve of His Crucifixion He said to us all, "Do this in remembrance of Me"; (*b*) which has been observed by the Christians of the New Testament, the early and middle ages, all the

centuries up to the present where prejudice, ignorance or sloth has not intervened?

See how the Holy Communion fulfils every noble longing of human hearts in their approach to God:

1. *It supplies us with an Altar and a Sacrifice.* Every great world religion has desired these in some way. It is a God-implanted instinct; confirmed by the Divine approval of the Jewish Sacrifices, and, most of all, by the example of Jesus in joining in such sacrifices and using *strictly sacrificial language* in appointing the Holy Communion. It is significant that the clergy of the Church of England are admitted to the *priesthood*, and a priest's duty always must be to *offer sacrifice*.

2. It leads us away from all miserable thoughts of self, even from the thought of saving our own souls, up to the true idea of religion, viz. that our lives and all we have are ours to offer to God. Public worship is not meant to be the functioning of a Mutual Improvement Society, but the expression of the people's adoring thoughts and of their homage to God.

3. The Sacrifice offered to God the Father is the same as Christ offered on Calvary, One, sufficient, permanent. There is the same High

Priest, Jesus, Who acts as always by a human agent, the earthly priest (duly called and chosen, and ordained by a Bishop). There is the same Victim offered, Our Lord Himself, truly present on our altars after the Consecration when His words ("This is My Body," "This is My Blood") have been spoken and the Holy Spirit has effected the admittedly mysterious change. He is still, though Risen and Ascended in glorious life, the Crucified Saviour, the Lamb of God, "as it had been slain." The Sacrifice is offered to the same God. It is offered for the same purpose, to adore and glorify Him. It is as though in the showing of Christ's Death, by the separate consecration of the Bread to be His Body and the Wine to be His Blood, we said, "We put Thee in mind of Thine infinite love in giving Thine only Son to die for us. That is the kind of God we believe Thee to be and so we adore in the way Thy Son has taught us."

4. The Sacrifice (as one of its names "Eucharist," or "Thanksgiving," tells) is the best way, for it is Christ's way, of thanking God for the blessings of redemption and all gifts of His love.

5. It is a Sacrifice of propitiation, i.e. it makes atonement for the sins of the whole world and

opens the way for us to draw near to the Father, bringing with us in our prayers both the living and the dead, pleading the merits of Jesus Crucified.

6. It supplies communicants with the very Bread of Life, of Which if a man eat Christ says He will raise him up at the last day.

7. It is the strongest bond between Christians who all kneel humbly, on the sole right of pardon through the Precious Blood, to be partakers of the One Bread, the One Body of Christ.

8. It is not a Sacrifice offered to excuse us from service or self-sacrifice, for we profess in it to offer, in and with the Sacrifice of Christ, "ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice."

Before summing up, it is perhaps well that I should say a word regarding what is called the *Real Presence*, i.e. the presence on our altars of Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, under the forms of Bread and Wine. It is very mysterious; but so is the presence of our souls in our material bodies; so are the processes of reproduction and growth; so above all is the foundation fact of Christianity, viz. that God the Son was born of a pure Virgin and lived as Man on earth. (a) The Presence of Jesus in the Sacrament is spiritual,

not as we say, material, because His Body is now a spiritual, glorified Body, not subject to the same limitations as ours in their present condition.

(b) In the Sacrament we have not a God made of Bread; but Our Lord, leaving all the natural qualities of bread in the outward part of the Sacrament, yet makes it the vehicle of the inward part, which our Church Catechism states to be "the Body and Blood of Christ which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful."

(c) We have Christ's own authority for the belief, both from His words, "This is My Body," etc., and from His plain teaching in St. John vi (which please read again carefully). Christ could have said, "This represents or is a figure of My Body," but He did not. (d) The change of the Bread into His Body is effected by God the Holy Spirit, and to God all things are possible.

(e) Christ chose the forms of Bread and Wine because His whole Service has the nature of a commemorative Banquet, in which, while the chief purpose is to put God adoringly, thankfully and pleadingly in mind of the sacrifice of His Son, we are to be united in the closest spiritual union with Our Saviour. (f) Belief in the Real Presence has been held in the Church from the first days till now, and is as certain as belief in

the Resurrection. (g) The safe attitude is not to try to pierce the mystery by our poor little minds but to use it with our hearts.

Now, sum up. Jesus appointed the Holy Communion, or the Mass, as His own special Service. He led His Church by His Spirit to celebrate it every Sunday and on certain other days for the general congregation. He provides in it a perfect Sacrifice to the Father and the perfect Bread of Life for our souls. He commands all baptized into His kingdom and Family, as loyal subjects and as loving members, to come *every* Sunday to join in it. Is *our* answer to *His* command and invitation going to be "Yes" or "No"? Don't let us forget that it is "Yes" or "No" to Jesus. Surely we can have no better *rule of worship* than that given by Our Lord. By all means let us add others. But do not let us imagine that there is any substitute for the Lord's Own Service for all the Lord's people every Lord's Day.

FURTHER NOTE ON THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE .

To set the Eucharistic Sacrifice, presented in every celebration of the Holy Communion, in its true perspective, one must take a broad view.

Priest, Jesus, Who acts as always by a human agent, the earthly priest (duly called and chosen, and ordained by a Bishop). There is the same Victim offered, Our Lord Himself, truly present on our altars after the Consecration when His words ("This is My Body," "This is My Blood") have been spoken and the Holy Spirit has effected the admittedly mysterious change. He is still, though Risen and Ascended in glorious life, the Crucified Saviour, the Lamb of God, "as it had been slain." The Sacrifice is offered to the same God. It is offered for the same purpose, to adore and glorify Him. It is as though in the showing of Christ's Death, by the separate consecration of the Bread to be His Body and the Wine to be His Blood, we said, "We put Thee in mind of Thine infinite love in giving Thine only Son to die for us. That is the kind of God we believe Thee to be and so we adore in the way Thy Son has taught us."

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FURTHER NOTE ON THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE .

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Let me proceed summarily:—

1. God made man for His glory. Man was meant to offer himself in perfect holiness to his Creator.

2. Man failed by falling into sin and consequently acquired a nature impaired in will-power and disordered.

3. Yet man never lost the idea of the sacrifice due to God and tried by various offerings to approach Him.

4. In the Church-nation of Israel and Jewry typical sacrifices were regulated with Divine approval. Perhaps the most notable was that of the spotless lamb, the blood of which, representing the life, was carried by the High-priest into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled on the mercy-seat as an atonement.

Three leading ideas were expressed in various sacrifices—in the trespass-offering, penitence for sin; in the burnt-offering, the acknowledgment of God's demand for complete self-oblation; in the peace-offering, a desire for true communion between God and man, figured by the victim's being partly consumed by fire and partly eaten by the worshippers.

5. Our Lord at the Passover-season deliberately appointed the characteristic New

Covenant worship by showing how the Church should re-present for all time before the Father His Sacrifice on the Cross. On Calvary He made atonement for man's failure by offering Himself as the Head of the human family. His motive was perfect, the desire to give the Father something perfectly worthy of Him, His own infinite merits, and to put at man's disposal this perfect sacrifice with which to draw near to God. He presented it in perfect obedience and at unutterable cost, the cost of His own life. He so made Himself at one with every member of our sin-stained race that He experienced the sense of darkness and desolation that should have been ours, and thus offered a "Broken and Contrite Heart." He pleaded by His offering for all His brethren.

The Father showed His acceptance of this Sacrifice by the raising of Jesus from the dead. The Son ascended to heaven and carried there His life, represented by the Blood, to offer Himself and plead for us for ever. He left the Eucharist on earth, in which certain elements, Bread and Wine, become by virtue of consecration His Body and Blood. He is there, God the Son Incarnate, under the outward forms. So we say that there are present on the altar after the Consecra-

tion the Body and Blood, the Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. He is there the Crucified, the same Sacrifice as hung on Calvary, His death not repeated but His offering perpetuated day by day, joined in a mystery to His presentation of Himself in heaven.

6. Our Lord said, "Do this in Remembrance of Me"—or "for My Memorial"—meaning, "Carry out this service of the Upper Room, enact this sacrificial drama, to put the Father in mind of My Sacrifice and of His wonderful love in giving Me to be the Sacrifice. So will you best adore Him, thank Him and plead with Him for yourselves and all."

7. Here is the perfect sin-offering for all men, making up for all failures of the whole race. Here is our burnt-offering, with Whom we dare to offer ourselves, our souls and bodies, a living sacrifice. Here is our peace-offering, by uniting ourselves with Whom in Holy Communion we commune with the Father in the perfect peace of pardon and reconciliation.

8. The Holy Catholic Church is first and foremost a priestly society, of which every member is called on to take his full share in presenting the Eucharistic Sacrifice for the glory of God and for the comfort of the living and the

peace of the dead. The earthly priest speaks and acts for Christ, the heavenly High-priest, and the faithful people unite in heart in his words and actions. That is, in short, the meaning of the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

VI

FOOD AND FASTING, HOLY COMMUNION AND THE DAYS OF FASTING AND ABSTINENCE

It is a matter of great importance to have good rules for Food and Fasting.

1. *Food*.—Every day we pray “Give us this day our daily bread,” and our Catechism explains that this means “I pray unto God that he will send us all things that be needful both for our souls and bodies,” so first we shall consider the *Food of the soul*.

In a certain sense we receive such food from God by a faithful use of the Holy Scriptures; by “waiting on sound doctrine,” that is by careful listening to the truths of God taught us by His priests; by a reverent appreciation of the beauties of Nature and Art; and by daily prayer and meditation. But without any doubt, the means above all means left us by Our Lord is that spoken of by Him in the sixth chapter of St. John, and at the institution of Holy Communion, when He prescribes for *all* the food of His own Body and Blood, wonderfully bestowed on us in that great

Sacrament, which our Catechism describes as "generally necessary to salvation," that is, necessary where it may be had. Hear what He says: "The bread of God is He Who cometh down from heaven." "I am the bread of life." "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die." "I am the living bread": "If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Who eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." (All in St. John vi.) At the first Holy Communion in the Upper Room He took bread, and, having blessed it, said, "Take, eat; this is My body." And He took the cup, saying, "This is My blood . . . drink ye all of it." We receive not a gift from Jesus, but Jesus Himself. The Holy Food is Jesus.

From the day of Pentecost we find the early Christians receiving this Holy Food, many of them every day, the whole body of them every Sunday. Consider the necessity of receiving it if we would have eternal life, and the great bounty of Our Lord in supplying it every day at the

altar. Because it is so freely given, let us not despise it. Because it is so necessary, let us not neglect it. If we are depending on other means than this, directly appointed by Jesus Himself, and are wilfully refusing Holy Communion, what hope of salvation can be ours? Such neglect can be called by no other names than deliberate disobedience and sinful folly. As to the frequency of receiving, we should always start with the thought of the maximum: many people have the opportunity of receiving the Food every day in answer to their prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," and many humble Christians do so receive it.

What does our Prayer Book say about it? Well, it says, "Every Parishioner shall communicate at least three times in the year, of which Easter to be one." There is the minimum, *at least* three times a year for all who wish to keep in any kind of connection with the Church. But the Book shows how far that is from the ideal by inviting all who are duly prepared to receive at each celebration (of course, not to receive more than once on any day, according to the universal custom of the Church), forbidding any to say, "I will not communicate, because I am otherwise hindered with worldly business," or "because I

am a grievous sinner" (for then he ought to repent, confess and amend). "When God calleth you, are ye not ashamed to say ye will not come?" Now the Prayer Book provides for a *daily* celebration of Holy Communion, so daily it urges on all to think whether it is possible to communicate. I think we may safely say that, taking into account the need for a good preparation, it is possible for *very* many, perhaps most, of our communicants to receive once a week, preferably on Sunday, and for many to receive at least twice, if not oftener, by the use of a little sacrifice. If we really prized Our Lord's gift of Himself, we should manage it, and we should never have to lament the fewness of communicants. The Prayer Book says, that "Our Saviour Jesus Christ . . . is our spiritual food and sustenance in that Holy Sacrament," that we have in It "the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ," and teaches us at each celebration to pray, "Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body, and our souls washed through His most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us."

With regard to ordinary food, simple rules are sufficient, e.g. (a) we should work for it; (b) we should receive it from God with thankfulness; (c) we should enjoy it in moderation and in willingness to share it. Obviously greed and selfishness are strictly forbidden.

2. Now for some *rules of Fasting*. To fast in the strict sense is to do without any food for a time. In the Old Testament times, fasting was carefully ordained for the Jewish Church. Our Lord Himself doubtless kept these fasts. He fasted forty days in the wilderness, a religious fast. He prophesied that when He, "the Bridegroom," should be taken from His people, they would fast. He taught as one of the Gospel duties (along with prayer and almsgiving) that we should fast. So we take it that He approved of fasting in principle and of prescribed rules for fasting. The Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, appointed fasts from the earliest times, and our Prayer Book enjoins them upon all her people.

Generally speaking, we ought to fast for these reasons: (a) Out of obedience to God's rule in His Church. Even if we saw no good in it, that is sufficient. (b) Out of desire to share Our Lord's fasting and to discipline our bodies. (c) Because the outward world so easily captivates us.

(d) As some kind of penance for many sins of indulgence, of ourselves and others. (e) To help us in recollection of certain days and seasons.

The Prayer Book sets forth in full the days of Fasting and Abstinence. A day of Abstinence is one on which we partake of no flesh-meat. Fasting adds the obligation, at least, of eating less, and will suggest abstaining from certain foods and lessening the amount consumed. Let me say, first, that children and the aged and infirm are only bound to Abstinence; that Fasting should not be used to such an extent as to injure health, though (mark it), the best doctors say that wise fasting improves health; and, secondly, that the observances of these days should be religious and not merely formal, and so should be marked by special prayer and meditation.

The chief fast days of the year are all Fridays, because on a Friday Our Saviour was crucified for us: to think of the reason will lead every devout person to observe the fast.

Besides Fridays, there are also the forty days of Lent, i.e. all weekdays from Ash Wednesday to Easter Even. As a general rule a dispensation is given to all who have to work hard, permitting them to keep as days of abstinence only all Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent, along with the

Ember Saturday immediately preceding the Second Sunday. The devout will try to make up by giving more time to prayer, the daily Mass, etc., on other days. The note of Lent throughout should be one of penitence, not mere miserableness. To know ourselves and our need of pardon, to seek forgiveness, to keep our bodies in subjection, to walk very close to Our Blessed Lord—all these will be made more real and possible by having a rule of fasting.

It remains only to add a short note on the fast from all food and drink from the midnight previous to our reception of Holy Communion. First, let none foolishly say that this is to make the bodily side of our preparation too prominent. Jesus, God the Son, to redeem us took a body. In the Sacrament He gives us His Body. In delivering the Sacrament the priest says, "*The Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ . . . preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life.*"

The Gospel of the Incarnation (i.e. God the Son's taking of our flesh) is concerned with the whole man, body and soul. Moreover, in enjoining fasting on the communicant, the Church prescribes in the same breath careful spiritual preparation.

The historical argument for fasting Communion

is conclusive. (1) It is declared by such early writers as Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Augustine, as being of Apostolic institution. St. Chrysostom was horrified because some of his calumniators accused him of giving Holy Communion to one who was not fasting. (2) It was universal in the primitive Church, and cannot be imagined to have been so unless regarded as of Apostolic custom.

The Devotional reason for fasting Communion is that Our Lord's Body and Blood should be the first food of the day. If it is some sacrifice to fast, surely that is fitting for those coming to feed on the Food of Our Lord's atoning Sacrifice.

The Anglican Bishops a few years ago, after long and solemn deliberation, declared fasting Communion to be "an ancient and laudable custom of the Church." Dispensations may be given for very grave reasons; but it should be noted that most cases of difficulty can be dealt with by receiving Holy Communion in the home, by communicants of delicate health coming in at an early celebration shortly before or after the actual administration; or otherwise after consulting the parish priest. The increasing custom of Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament makes private Communion much more easy to arrange. That the observance of fasting Com-

munion does not lessen the number of communions made is proved conclusively by the incontrovertible fact that these are by far the most frequent where the "ancient and laudable custom" is observed.

It is worth noting that in the first rubric for the Baptism of those of riper years, they are to "be exhorted to prepare themselves with Prayer and Fasting."

VII

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDER— BISHOP, PRIEST AND DEACON

PERHAPS no word is more misunderstood by many to-day than "priest." Some good folk even go so far as to say, "Of course, we have no priests in the Church of England!" So let us devote some consideration to the Ministry of the Church of God and especially of the Church of England.

In the Upper Room when Our Lord instituted the solemn mysteries of His Body and Blood, the Holy Communion, He gave a definite command to His Apostles, "Do this in remembrance of Me," and empowered them to consecrate the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. Again on the evening of the first Easter Day He gave them the authority on earth committed to Him by His Father, breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose soever sins ye remit (i.e. forgive), they are remitted unto them." Again He said, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost

. . . teaching them . . . and lo I am with you alway unto the end of the world." In Acts i. 2, 3, we read that He "had given commandments unto the Apostles whom He had chosen . . . speaking (during the forty days after the Resurrection) of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God," and (v. 8) promised, "ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

After the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came down upon them, we find the Apostles fulfilling Our Lord's commands, and amongst other things establishing a three-fold Ministry, of which the first rank was to continue their own work with full powers, the second to assist in special duties and powers and the third to assist in a lesser capacity.

The threefold order is in organized existence in the lifetime of the Apostles, as the New Testament makes clear, and from very early days the three names attach to the offices, Bishop, Priest and Deacon. The Church of England has clearly pronounced itself on this in different ways, e.g. (1) By definitely refusing to follow Continental Reformers in abandoning the ancient Orders; (2) By insisting on ordination by the hands of a Bishop of a minister of one of the sects who desires to minister in our communion; (3) By

carefully securing the succession of Catholic Bishops in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; (4) By the Preface to the Services employed at ordination, which says, "It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church; Bishops, Priests and Deacons. Which offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation, that no man might presume to exercise any of them, except he be first called, tried, examined and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same, and also by public prayer, with Imposition (i.e. laying on) of hands, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful authority. And therefore to the intent that these Orders may be continued, and reverently used and esteemed, in the Church of England; no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest or Deacon in the Church of England, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined and admitted thereunto according to the form hereafter following, or hath had formerly Episcopal Consecration or Ordination." No words could be more explicit.

The Ordination services and the Prayer Book

at large make the duties of the various orders clear.

The Bishop is to teach the truth of the Holy Scriptures; to endeavour to banish heresy and error; to show a good example; to endeavour to exercise discipline; to ordain and confirm; to be charitable. Bishops, taking counsel with the priests, ought to be guardians of the faith. The Bishop, as the Priest and Deacon, is bound by the Canon Law of the Church and has no mere arbitrary authority.

The Deacon is to assist in the visitation of the sick and report cases to the priest, to read the Holy Gospel and to administer the Chalice (Cup) at Holy Communion, to preach if he has license to do so, to baptize if a priest may not be had, and to say or sing at public services such parts of Morning and Evening Prayer as do not imply a Priest as officiant.

The priest really holds the central office. He acts for the Bishop as being the ordinary minister to the flock of most of the sacraments, and the ordinary teacher. I do not think that any reasonable person would controvert the statement that the Priesthood is the backbone of the Christian Ministry. Let us see what his chief duties are. In the Bishop's address to him at his ordination he

is reminded that he is to be "the messenger, watchman and steward of the Lord; to teach and premonish (i.e. warn), to feed and provide for the Lord's family; to seek for Christ's sheep that are scattered abroad (presumably chiefly by visitation)," "to be studious in reading and learning the Scriptures." The priest promises to teach from the Scriptures all things required for salvation; to minister faithfully the doctrine, sacraments and discipline of Christ; to banish heresy and error; to obey the Ordinary and other chief Ministers (i.e. in all things lawfully enjoined in accordance with the Canons of the Church).

Reference to the various services in the Prayer Book complete the picture of what a priest in the Church of England is meant to be.

It might be summarized thus:

1. He is quite definitely sent out with Divine Authority to exercise his high office.
2. He is quite definitely associated with the Bishop in the duty of positively teaching the doctrines and administering the discipline of the Church, e.g. he must decide when to give and when to withhold absolution from a penitent who has confessed his sins.
3. The Sacraments administered by him do not depend for their efficacy upon his personal

character or virtues but on his office; otherwise no one could say when he had truly received a sacrament.

4. His highest privilege and duty, the highest of all open to either Bishop or Priest, is to celebrate the Holy Communion. The root idea of Priesthood is the offering of a sacrifice. In Hebrews we read that the priest is ordained "to offer gifts and sacrifices." The earthly priest is privileged to act in union with the unchangeable priesthood of Jesus Christ, presenting Our Lord's very Body and Blood on the earthly altar at the Holy Communion, which is the Christian Sacrifice. None of his duties so humbles yet so uplifts the priest as this.

5. The priest's duty is to feed both whole and sick with the Bread of Life, Christ's Body and Blood. To this end he must urge the necessity ("Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you"), and at least if he finds it necessary, is bound to reserve the Blessed Sacrament perpetually that It may be ready at any hour for the sick or dying. Such reservation was ordered by the ancient Law and Custom of the Church of England.

6. The priest should, when it is opportune, preach a sermon at the Holy Communion and

should teach faithfully and publicly all truth necessary to salvation.

7. The priest should see that, as far as may be, the Holy Communion is celebrated every day in his parish and the other services of the Church duly performed.

8. The priest should be faithful in visiting the sick, and others according to opportunity, especially the careless.

9. The priest should urge sinners troubled about their sins (what person honest with himself is not?) to come to Confession and absolve the truly penitent in Christ's name.

10. The priest is the ordinary minister at Baptisms and Marriages.

11. The priest blesses solemnly in Christ's name.

12. The priest is bound to give much time every day to the study of sacred truth, prayer and meditation.

Perhaps this is sufficient to show what a burden God lays on the priest's shoulders. It will be observed that there is no suggestion of its being the duty of a priest to try to please the people; or of his hiding up the truth lest he should offend some, especially the well-to-do; or of his raising money for various objects; or of his

organizing innumerable guilds and meetings; or of his being a striking social success. Surely his job is enough for him! It is up to the laity to support him by prayer, by regular attendance at and use of the Sacraments, and by undertaking at least the great bulk of all the secular work necessary for the carrying on of ordinary parochial life.

It is very significant that the service of ordination is commonly called "the Sacrament of Holy Order," and it is a good thing both for priest and people to remember its sacramental suggestions. Many people find a real comfort in addressing their priest as "Father." It puts them at once in a right relationship to one called to bring them into the Family of God, to be their spiritual guide, the agent ordained to feed them with the food of Immortality, to reconcile them with God and one another and to prepare them for "the last journey."

May I emphasize finally the great need of more men dedicating themselves to the life of a priest and of more ample funds for their preparation and training. We are grievously understaffed at home and abroad. Let parents and boys and young men seriously hearken to Our Lord saying, "Who will go for Me?" He does not promise ease or high

reward. He does call men to take up the Cross and to be prepared to share His reproach. But also He has many consolations and joys for those who, counting the cost and casting themselves on His power and protection, answer His challenge with, "Lord, here am I, send me."

VIII

HOW MANY SACRAMENTS? HOLY UNCTION AND HOLY MATRIMONY

I AM sometimes asked what is my authority for saying that there are seven sacraments, and am pointed to the Church Catechism which speaks of "two only, as generally necessary to salvation." In answer I would say:—

1. The Catechism does not say simply "two only," but adds "as generally necessary to salvation," i.e. necessary where they may be had. Obviously Holy Order and Matrimony are not "generally necessary."

2. The number of rites to which the term "sacraments" should be given varied very much in primitive times, but gradually settled down to seven over the whole Church.

3. The important matter is not the *term* "sacrament" but the rites answering to the name.

4. The Church of England in other of her formularies speaks of two Gospel or Great Sacraments (viz. Baptism and Holy Communion) and of five other rites *commonly called* sacraments

(viz. Penance, Confirmation, Holy Unction, Holy Order, Holy Matrimony). It describes December 25th as "The Nativity of our Lord . . . commonly called Christmas Day"; and we all do call it "Christmas Day." So we call these five other rites "sacraments."

5. These Sacraments are some of them involved in the two Great Sacraments, e.g. people should normally be confirmed before receiving Holy Communion; they should be in a state of grace and often need the use of Penance to that end; a priest is required to celebrate the Holy Mysteries and that implies Holy Order, etc.

Five sacraments have already been considered: now I mean to deal shortly with the two remaining ones.

I. *Holy Unction*.—This Sacrament is very simple and scriptural. When a man is seriously ill a priest is sent for, who, amongst other services, may anoint with oil the sick man, in the Anglican Church, I suppose, usually upon the forehead and hands, accompanying the action with prayers for a blessing on his body and soul. The oil should have been blessed by a Bishop, but in case of necessity the priest may bless it. The effect of the anointing is a new power given to the faithful recipient to battle with his sickness, improvement

of his bodily condition if it be God's will, and peace of mind regarding the future.

Now consider these things:

1. The *authority* for anointing. Our Lord in sending out His disciples gave them directions. We read that they anointed certain sick folk with oil and that they recovered (St. Mark vi. 13). St. James in his Epistle (v. 14-16) gives directions for anointing the sick and says, "The Lord shall raise him up." Such anointing has been practised in the Church from primitive times.

2. The *benefit* of anointing. The result is entirely in God's hands. Anointing does not mean that the doctor has no place: doctor and priest are both just ministers of God's gift of healing and should co-operate. As far as human reason can penetrate a Divine mystery, I should say that the benefit flows from the sick person's sense of having done what Our Lord intends and from having committed himself wholly into His hands, and I should throw the emphasis on blessing bestowed on the sick man's soul. I have consulted some priests of large experience who have kept a record and their figures correspond with my own. We have anointed only those very seriously ill, and of the total number anointed two-thirds have recovered, some entirely, some for a considerable

period, and practically all have found peace of mind.

3. Holy Unction should *not usually be isolated*, but be closely associated with Penance and Holy Communion, the three being commonly called, in this connection, "*the Last Sacraments*."

(1) First should come Confession and Absolution. In St. James v. 16, in the English Version, the word "therefore," expressed in the original Greek by a strong word, has been left out. "*Therefore* (i.e. in view of Holy Unction), confess your faults." The sick man makes as good a confession as he can and is absolved.

(2) Then he receives Holy Communion, to be his Viaticum or Food for the Journey—of Life or Death.

(3) Lastly he is anointed, and part of the benefit is that "his sins shall be forgiven him," i.e. sins forgotten through weakness.

Oil was doubtless used as the outward matter of this Sacrament because it was the symbol of healing (cf. its use by the good Samaritan) and of peace (cf. the proverb "oil on the troubled waters").

I feel that this Sacrament only needs to be known to ensure its wide use by the faithful in their time of need. God means it to be a vehicle of His goodness to us.

II. *Holy Matrimony*.—Marriage is as old as mankind. Christian Marriage was instituted by Our Lord. He blessed it by His presence at the marriage at Cana. He insisted on one husband, one wife. He taught that marriage is indissoluble, i.e. that the marriage bond holds for the time of survival of both partners: "Whatsoever God both joined together let no man put asunder." Let me use brevity in setting down important considerations concerning this Sacrament:—

1. It is intended for the baptized: baptism must always be the first Sacrament received.

2. The ministers of the Sacraments are the contracting parties, who minister it to one another.

3. It should be solemnized publicly in presence of the Church, represented specially by a Bishop or, more usually, a priest, who witnesses and records the vows and blesses the union.

4. The outward part of the Sacrament is the contract and its implications. The inward part is the grace God gives the couple to live well in the married state.

5. The importance of the Sacrament lies in the fact that it affects the root of the whole social system, the family. It is a Sacrament not simply for the personal benefit of the two contracting

parties, but also affects the children and the whole community.

6. It is not to be contracted within the prohibited degrees of kindred or affinity (set down in the Prayer Book).

7. It does not dispense from careful self-control of the sex instinct.

8. Its end, over and above mutual helpfulness in Christian living, is the production and upbringing of children in the true Faith to serve God in their generation.

9. To use it perversely or selfishly for the mere gratification of sense is to incur the guilt of sacrilege, i.e. the insulting of a Divine institution.

10. A vocation to serve God in the married state may be just as pure and true as one to serve Him in a life of virginity, but only if received as a vocation.

11. Separation (whether by agreement or Divorce), should take place only in the last extremity. It gives no liberty to either party to enter into a second contract of marriage during the partner's lifetime. Where Divorce and so-called re-marriage are on the increase, the whole social system is on the way to disintegration, love is soiled, mere passion runs riot, children are

unwanted or suffer horribly, and God is openly defied.

12. Finally, marriage should be contracted only after much thought and prayer and sufficient acquaintanceship of the parties. Its privileges should be used temperately and its responsibilities be faced bravely. Its users should concentrate on the consecration of the home. All Catholic Christians should set their faces against anything that might tend to loosen the bonds or degrade the ideals of God's Sacrament of Marriage.

I have now dealt briefly with the sacraments of the Church and a short summary may prove of help. A sacrament in our sense is a very holy service, appointed by Our Lord directly or through the Holy Spirit's guidance in the Church, with an outward part appealing to sight, hearing and other bodily senses, and an inward part, the production of a certain effect in the soul. These sacraments are to be expected in the religion the first note of which is "The Word (i.e. God the Son) was made Flesh," and which claims man, body and soul, for God. The outward parts aid through the senses our minds and hearts, are signs to us of God fulfilling His promises to us, give us a definite way in which to appropriate grace, are a distinguishing mark of the faithful,

kindle in us an expectant and charitable frame of mind, and subdue our pride by leading us to submit to regulations imposed on us.

The sacraments are the bridge between the natural and the spiritual. Man is born again in Baptism; he grows in strength by being confirmed; he is nourished by receiving Holy Communion; he is healed of spiritual maladies by Penance; he is comforted in serious illness by Holy Unction; he has a divinely instituted government in the ministry supplied by Holy Order; he is led to consecrate his power of perpetuating the human race by Holy Matrimony.

The sacraments are God's method of answering our prayers for grace; for by them the Holy Spirit works within our souls, cleansing, strengthening, renewing, cheering, sanctifying us, to be fit servants of God here and to prepare us for the service of the Kingdom hereafter.

It remains that we all use them according to our need, and endeavour to bring others to know the joy and benefit of obedience to Our Lord in what is often called "the Sacramental life," or "the life of the spirit."

IX

THE RULE OF FAITH—THE CREED

THE Creed, giving us the Rule of Faith, underlies all Christian activities. The first use of a creed was probably in connection with Baptism. The actual words of the creed were given to the candidate on the eve of his baptism to enable him to express his belief.

1. *Creed* means belief, being derived from the word *Credo*, the Latin for "I believe."

2. Creeds are not "thrust down our throats"; they are commended to our heads and hearts.

3. God gives us help to believe, for example:

(1) Everywhere men are found to believe in "a Power above."

(2) The world does not explain itself. It presupposes an origin and a purpose. Whence came life, in the vegetable world, in the animal? How originated the universe of stars and suns and moons, and how are they upheld? What power regulates the adjustment of members of the tiniest insect? How came beauty into the world, and what was its meaning before man was, or now, in the desert places of the world? These

thoughts lead at least to the probability of a Creator, Mighty, Purposeful, a Lover of Beauty.

(3) Men everywhere can appreciate the difference between right and wrong when it is put before them, and feel themselves answerable for their manner of life. They expect the punishment of evil and the reward of good. But answerable to Whom? To be judged and dealt with by Whom? Again, these thoughts lead to the ideas of a Being in relations with man to Whom he is answerable, a Being Who loves righteousness and hates iniquity; and of a future world where justice will be meted out as it is not here.

(4) God has left us the testimony of history, in engraved rocks of the earth which show men aeons ago worshipping and believing in immortality, and in written records which give us in particular the story of the chosen race of Israel, with its conviction of the One God and of certain duties, and an account of the life of Jesus Christ, with His teaching and works, the manner of His Birth and Death, His Resurrection and Ascension, the coming of His Spirit on the Church, the vitality, spread, influence, institutions and teaching of that Body. We have the unbroken record of that Body's life, combined with the tradition of its worship, witnessing to the facts of Chris-

tianity, and we hear its loving voice, speaking to us to-day.

(5) Over and above all this we have that strange but perceptible power called the gift of faith, by which God enables us to believe what He has unfolded.

4. The Apostles' Creed comes down in practically its present form from early in the second century. It gives us the gist of Apostolic Teaching, dealing specially with the Trinity, Redemption and the Church.

THE HOLY TRINITY

1. The doctrine of the Trinity was taught gradually by Jesus. First He showed God to be truly Father of all, and Father in His eternal nature. Then He revealed Himself as own Son of the Father, of His Divine Nature and one with the Father, with Him before the world began. Then on the eve of His Passion He spoke of the sending of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, Who in a near and personal work would strengthen and guide man. According to the traditional formula of Baptism, He summed it up by telling His followers to baptize "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

At Christ's Baptism there was an outward

manifestation of the Father in the Voice, saying, "This is My Beloved Son"; of the Son in the form of Him being baptized in Jordan; and of the Holy Ghost in the dove-like radiance swooping down on Christ's head.

2. This revelation agrees with man's thought-out picture of God. God is all perfect, so He is love. Love manifests itself of necessity in; out-going to another. A God of loneliness, before angels or men, could not have been love. In fact, the Love of the Father went out to His Son: the Son returned the same Love: the Love was conscious of Both and bound them in one; and we call Him the Holy Spirit. This is crude, but true to thought. The Deity is not dependent for society on beings outside Himself.

3. There are not three Gods. The Father is the one fount of Godhead, but always the active fount. From Him from all eternity came the Son. Always there was the Holy Spirit, completing the Triune God, of one nature, of threefold personality, each possessing the Divine substance in his own peculiar fashion. There are Three Divine Persons but One Divine Nature.

4. In relation to mankind's salvation, all co-operate, with the same purpose, but each acting in His own appropriate fashion.

5. The knowledge of the Trinity is of supreme value to the Church for these reasons:

(1) Without it we could not worship God aright, for we could not appreciate His perfections, e.g. His love.

(2) Without it we could not begin to appreciate the depth of the Father's love to man. To give Jesus, if a good man merely, to sacrifice Himself for His fellows, is one thing: to give His very Own eternally begotten Son for man is quite a different thing.

(3) Without it we could not understand how Jesus could die for all men. A mere man would not be big enough or good enough. Only God's Son could so identify Himself with all as to die to save them. (Of this more later.)

(4) Without it we could not trust as we do the teachings of Jesus Christ handed on to us in His Church.

CREATION

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." The Church stands for no special theory of Creation, but simply for the fact. Genesis gives a poetical moral picture of the development of matter, of Cosmos (or Order) from Chaos (the Confused), of life vegetable and

life animal, of man, at whose disposal all was put. Man stands alone as possessing a soul or spiritual nature, immortal, making possible his fellowship with God. He is good, free from faults, possessed of special grace to help him always to choose the right and develop to the full of his powers, so as to become fit for everlasting communion with and service of God. Sin entered and spoiled the glory. Man was tempted through the agency of spiritual beings, angels who fell through pride and disobedience and who desired to drag down the new race. Man could have resisted, but yielded and deliberately disobeyed God, sinned against light. The sinful acts produced sinful habits, weakened man's will, blinded his judgment and spiritual perception. Further, God withdrew His special grace that man might learn his great need. Children inherit many points of physical and aesthetic likeness from their fathers. Their souls also, coming direct from God, are impaired by union with their bodies derived from their parents. They begin life with a handicap. It is true, God gives sufficient help always to His children; but, for the special Kingdom of Grace to fit for Glory, man had to wait for "the fullness of time," when the Deliverer promised to Israel should come. God will do

more than repair His spoiled creation. He will raise it to new and undreamed-of heights of sanctity.

THE INCARNATION

("I believe) in Jesus Christ, His only Son . . . Virgin Mary." God the Son came into the world, taking a true human body and soul. This we call the Incarnation, i.e. the taking on of flesh. The manner of it was this. It was fitting that God the Son should have a human nature free from all taint of sin, not below the standard of the first human being. There was chosen out of all woman-kind the only one worthy to be His Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary. God, Who knows all things future, knew how she would perfectly respond to grace. He gives grace always in proportion to the magnitude of the task He imposes. Never was such a vocation as that of mothering Jesus. So Mary had pre-eminent grace and was free from every stain, by a strange anticipation, through the merits of her own Son. She had apparently vowed her virginity to God, and so wondered, at the archangel's message, how she would become a mother; but she consented to God's will and was rewarded by conceiving through a miracle of the Holy Ghost the body of Jesus and yet pre-

serving her virginity. She has two special titles, "Ever Virgin" and "Mother of God," the latter signifying that He Whom she conceived and bore was from the first truly God the Son. Her Son has two natures, of God and of man. Each appears in the Gospel story, the Deity in the unique manner of His Birth, His miracles, His teaching, His Resurrection; the Humanity in His hunger, thirst, weariness, loneliness, death. There are two wills, the human will and the will He shared with the Father. His triumph is seen in the Garden of Gethsemane when He submitted His human will wholly to the Divine. The two natures are not confused but possessed together by His one Divine Personality as God the Son.

His name *Jesus* signifies "God our Saviour." He saved us by making Himself one with us, and as our Head bore the everlasting penalty due to our sins, leaving such temporal penalties as are needed for our reformation, or the reformation of others, to be borne by us. Further, He saved man by winning for him new grace to fight against temptation.

The word *Christ* (which means "anointed," the same as "Messiah") describes his office, anointed at His Baptism with the Holy Ghost to be our Prophet, Priest and King. The Prophet is one

who tells forth the mind of God for man's guidance; the Son alone could be perfect prophet and still continues His teaching work by His Church's officers. The Priest is one who offers a sacrifice and mediates between God and Man. Jesus alone could offer a perfect Sacrifice, which He did on Calvary, appointing it to be continually pleaded in the Eucharist, and is the One perfect Mediator between God and Man, yet shares that mediatorial work with every faithful member of His mystical Body, the Church. The King goes before and rules his people. Our Lord goes before us both in a perfect life and in the extremity of His suffering, and reigns in Heaven as Supreme over all His people, and on earth through the ordained rulers of His Church.

Christ is the *only* Son, as alone sharing the Divine Nature, and is, by right of His Deity and His Sacrifice, Lord of every human soul.

THE ATONEMENT

"Suffered under Pontius Pilate . . . buried." Christ's Sacrifice is a fact and is dated in time by reference to the governorship in Judæa of Pontius Pilate. The meaning of it is unfathomable, being the expression of Divine Love. The sufferings

were (1) of body, tortured in every member with a pain felt as pain could only be felt by One of such perfect and refined sensibilities; (2) of mind, at beholding the mad and wicked folly of those who rejected His heavenly counsel, the weakness of His chosen followers, and the ineffable anguish of His beloved Mother; (3) of spirit, as He realized to the full the insult to Divine holiness and love of the sins, corporate and several, of the race of men.

His Sacrifice is called atoning. To atone is to make up for deficiencies and faults. Man owed to God the offering of perfect love and obedience. He not only failed to make it, but deliberately disobeyed God's commands laid on his conscience and heart. Our Lord took humanity upon Him to deliver it. He lived a perfect life and in perfect love offered Himself on the Cross to the Father as Head and Representative of the race. Further, He so identified Himself in love with every member of the race that He felt in His Sacred Heart the shame and sorrow they ought to have felt. That was the Cup He raised to His lips in the Garden of Gethsemane and drained to the dregs on Calvary. The result was the darkness of desolation, expressed in "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and the breaking of His Heart in His sacrificial death. Thus intimately He made Him-

self at one with man, and, moreover, left the means whereby man might make himself at one with Him and thus share in the victory over sin and in the joy and power of His risen life. For consider :

(1) By the gift of faith man is able to appropriate the gift of Jesus as Saviour. (2) Faith leads him to use the Sacraments which unite him to the Incarnate Lord. By Baptism a man is made a member, a living part, of His Body. Confirmation gives him His Spirit's presence and power. Penance opens up the channels of life between man and His Saviour closed or clogged by sin. Holy Communion feeds him with the Body and Blood, the life, of the crucified and living Lord. (3) In conduct, by a life of obedience, he grows in union with, and likeness to, his Saviour. So the Atonement, made on Calvary, is an ever present reality, being continually applied, as it is continually pleaded, in the Sacrifice of the Altar.

THE DESCENT INTO HELL

"Hell," signifying "a place covered over," translates two words of the New Testament, *Gehenna*, the name given to the abode of those who finally turn from God, choosing evil rather than good, and *Hades*, the abode of souls de-

parted this life not yet ready to enter heaven. It was to Hades that the soul of Jesus went (1 Pet. iii. 18–20), to preach to the spirits in prison (a place of safe keeping). With joy He would speak and they would hear. There is comfort for all in this. Very few depart this life ready for heaven. Albeit men die with faces Godward, there are imperfections to be purged out and defects of light and love to be made good. Our Prayer Book bids us pray that “whatsoever defilements it (the soul) may have contracted in the midst of this . . . world . . . being *purged* and done away, it may be presented pure and without spot before Thee.” So the name “Purgatory” becomes attached to this state of preparation and waiting, and the prayers of the faithful on earth are lovingly offered to assist in such preparation.

THE RESURRECTION

The fact of the Resurrection is well attested (1) by the reliable testimony of authentic Scripture; (2) the constant traditions of the Church in belief and in worship (e.g. the observance of Sunday, the feast of Easter and the *joyful* celebration of the Eucharist); the Empty Tomb and the powerlessness of the Jews to explain it; and

the fruits in the lives of the Apostles, and generally by the vitality and character of the Holy Catholic Church.

Its significance was that God had accepted Jesus' Sacrifice and that the New Age had begun for Christians, in which all earthly values are revalued and death has lost its terrors. The Body of Jesus, in which He had expressed His love and experienced His sufferings, very fitly shared in His triumphs, and its raising lends a new sanctity to our bodies and calls for a new carefulness in their use. It is vain to speculate as to the nature of the risen body. Matter is altogether mysterious. Enough to know that (1) Jesus wore the same Body as before; (2) that it had new powers of motion, freedom from suffering, and immortality, fitting it for the heavenly state; (3) that our bodies will be like His body, perfect vehicles for the soul's everlasting activities. A beautiful speculation of old-time was that in each Communion we are building up our body of the Resurrection.

THE ASCENSION

After forty days of intercourse here and there with His friends, during which He doubtless gave them much counsel for the future, He departed

from them in blessing in such a manner as signified that He would not any more appear among them visibly. It was a symbol of the next stage of His work. It meant that He went to receive His reward, the Crown of Glory for His Humanity and the place of honour "at the right hand"; to prepare a place for us; to present Himself as perfect Sacrifice for us; and to send the gift of the Holy Spirit.

THE SECOND ADVENT

"From thence He shall come . . . dead." The angels after the Ascension foretold His coming again. The Apostles believed and taught it. The Lord had spoken of it, as is recorded in the Gospels. At first it seemed to the Apostles very close at hand; later they realized that a long time of preparation must intervene. Jesus meant it to be uncertain, that they might live as being "always ready." That there will be an end of this age all thinking men agree. That there will be a judgment, just and merciful, all good men believe.

The first Advent of Jesus was as Saviour; His second will be as Judge to manifest the fruits of His work. The judgment will be searching, of every thought, word and deed, and of good left undone; indeed it will be of characters.

It is good to think of four judgments: (1) Of ourselves by ourselves in our prayers as we review each day; (2) of ourselves by God's priest when we go to Confession; (3) of ourselves at the moment of death, the "Particular Judgment," by which our whole future will be decided; (4) of ourselves and all men at the "General Judgment" at the "last day," when all shall acknowledge at once the justice and mercy of God.

THE THIRD PERSON IN THE TRINITY

"I believe in the Holy Ghost." Our Lord clearly speaks of the Holy Ghost as personal. He is to comfort, i.e. make strong and brave; He is to guide into all truth; He is to convince men of sin. St. Paul says, "He makes intercessions" for us "with unutterable groanings." The Church has always worshipped Him as God. He comes as the Father's gift through Christ to carry on His work for all time, applying Our Lord's merits to us in the fellowship of His Church. (The Church may in one sense be called the workshop of the Holy Ghost.) He comes specially as the Spirit of the Incarnate God.

The account of His coming on the faithful remnant of the Old Testament Church in Acts ii.

and "baptizing" them suggests the leading features of His work. The "flames" speak of purification, enthusiasm and "fire of love." The "mighty rushing wind" speaks of power to carry men forward in the service of God. Pentecost is the baptism day of

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH

We may define this as the whole body of baptized people who are united under one Head, hold the one faith and use the same sacraments. It began at Jerusalem and quickly spread to the verges of the known world. Bishops, priests and deacons were consecrated and ordained everywhere. In certain important centres the Bishop became a great centre of power and influence, and lesser Bishops became grouped around him as Patriarch. This was so at Antioch, Alexandria, Rome, Constantinople and later Jerusalem. Reference of difficult cases was often made to the Patriarch, and in process of time reference was made more frequently to Rome. Naturally so, for it was the See of St. Peter and St. Paul, it was the capital of the world, it maintained unflinchingly the true faith, and it was specially easy of access from all parts of the Empire. Gradually the

Bishop of Rome, once one of many "Popes" (Fathers), later known as "the Pope," came to assert the right of control over all other Bishops and the whole Church, quite definitely so in the fifth, and again in the eighth century. The claim was disputed by many at different times, particularly by the Bishop of Constantinople (formerly Byzantium), the new capital of the Empire (from A.D. 330). Disputes led to bitterness and, after some long temporary breaches of union, at last in the year 1054 the East and the West divided in the Great Schism, not yet healed. The Church in England, being in the Western Patriarchate, thus became severed from the Churches of the East, known as "Orthodox." In England the Papal claims in their most absolute sense did not become insistent till comparatively late. The Church had been chiefly planted by missionaries from France, Ireland, Scotland and other countries, and was singularly independent. William the Conqueror introduced a new subservience, when it suited him, to the Pope, and the wicked King John, in his panic and unpopularity, was the cause of Rome's securing a still greater hold on the country. Protests were made from time to time in favour of greater freedom of action for the English Church, and

at last, in the sixteenth century, the English Bishops asserted their right to manage their own dioceses and, after some time the Pope excommunicated the English Queen.

The chief protest in England was against interference in temporal affairs, now happily a thing of the past. But obstinacy and political manœuvres led to the present position of a breach of outward communion with the See of Rome and those who hold with her. So we have the sad spectacle, due to faults on all sides, of three separated parts of the Catholic Church, all owning Jesus Christ as Supreme Head, holding the one Faith and using the same sacraments. The general position might be summed up thus: (1) The Church of England, the ancient Catholic Church in this land, is by the Providence of God "in possession" and is responsible to God for preaching the truth and ministering the Sacraments; (2) She is on cordial terms of friendship with the Orthodox Churches of the East, which have recently in conciliar utterances acknowledged the validity of her orders, i.e. her possession of a true ministry of Bishop, Priest and Deacon. The Anglican Bishops from all over the world have most heartily approved of the doctrines of these Churches as well as of those known as the Old

Catholics. One may say that intercommunion with these is well in sight, indeed with the old Catholics has been established; (3) Our Bishops have also publicly declared as a body, "There can be no fulfilment of the Divine Purpose in any scheme of reunion which does not ultimately include the great Latin Church of the West." Probably most people would agree that this would involve a recognition of the central and unifying position of the Apostolic See and that the visible Church might reasonably be expected to have a visible head, whatever concessions might be granted for local freedom, national rites and ceremonies, etc. One may frankly say that the wording of the Decree of Infallibility of 1870 must cause for very many serious difficulties; (4) All thinking and devout people of our communion would probably agree that Our Lord desires us to be in one outward visible Body, that He is praying for it, and that the Church's authority, moral influence and spiritual efficiency must remain impaired so long as we continue in our separate condition.

Our relation to Nonconformists of all sorts might be summarized by saying that, while we acknowledge both their sincerity and good works, we hold their ministry novel and quite different

from the priesthood of the Church, their sacramental rites deficient in number and usually of a different intention from those of the Church, and their guarantees of the faith in part uncertain.

So the practical conclusion is that we must be content to pray for and study steps towards reunion, meantime trying to use faithfully the means of grace and live a truly Catholic Christian life of goodwill towards all men; while, at the same time, we must take no action that might compromise our Catholic heritage or put any unnecessary hindrance in the way of ultimate reunion with the great Churches of the West and East.

It seems worth while to add a note on the four "Marks of the Church": (1) *One*.—Christ founded one only, with one belief, ministry, and set of sacraments. Disunion was severely dealt with by the Apostles. (2) *Holy*.—The Holy Spirit works in the Church, affords all the means needed for a holy life and has produced true holiness in many of her members. (3) *Catholic*.—The word signifies that the Church is for all time, for all races, and teaches all truth necessary to salvation. (4) *Apostolic*.—The Church is founded on the Apostles, carries on their mission to all the world, teaches the faith held by them, and hands on the

Apostolic Ministry in the "Apostolical succession" through its universal Episcopal ordinations.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

The Catholic Church includes the faithful on earth ("The Church Militant," i.e. fighting Christ's battle); the faithful departed ("The Church Expectant," i.e. waiting till they are ready for heaven, meantime being purged of all remnants of sin in Purgatory, and being further enlightened); and the perfected in heaven ("The Church Triumphant"). These are all one body. From earliest days prayers have been made and the Holy Sacrifice has been pleaded for "the living and the dead," and the help of the prayers of the saints was freely sought. We ask holy earthly friends to pray for us and quite as naturally ask the Blessed Virgin, St. Peter, St. Paul and others to intercede for us.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

Our sins pain us specially because they pain much more the Sacred Heart of Jesus. God in mercy has left us two Sacraments of pardon, Baptism and Penance, and allows us to purify

ourselves from slight sins by devout communions, earnest prayer and good works.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY—EVERLASTING

Our Lord taught this truth and set His seal to it by His own Resurrection. But we must remember that there are two possibilities, heaven and hell, the joy of everlasting service in the fellowship of the penitent and the presence of God, or everlasting banishment from God and hope. Jesus said of Judas, "Good were it for that man if he had never been born." Had it been possible for him after whatsoever suffering to come to glory, Jesus would have spoken differently. The Creed is thoroughly practical. To live true to our belief is to be making for the life everlasting.

May the dear Lord help us all to hold more firmly the Faith revealed to us in His holy Church.

X

THE RULE OF PRAYER

IN the Christian life it is most necessary to form and keep a good rule of Prayer.

One of the old Fathers described Prayer as the breath of the soul, as necessary for spiritual life as breathing is for bodily. In the Old Testament we find God's servants everywhere and at all times practising prayer. After forty days of prayer, Moses' mind was illuminated with a clear conception of Divine Law, which he formulated in the Ten Commandments. Prophets during prayer received messages for the Chosen People. Hezekiah and many others brought their difficulties to God in prayer. Daniel in his troubles opened his window towards Jerusalem and prayed to God. The Psalms form a book of prayer, dear to the Jews as it is to us. Prayer is the golden thread running through the whole course of the Old Testament dispensation.

The New Testament opens with gates of prayer. Zacharias at the prayers, offered with the incense, had tidings of the coming to him of his prophet-son, St. John the Baptist. Doubtless at a prayer-

hour, Gabriel brought to Blessed Mary the good tidings of her coming Motherhood by miracle of the World Redeemer, and in the great prayer of her Magnificat she gave thanks. The Saviour's life is one of prayer, culminating in the prayers of Gethsemane and Calvary. He gives a model form of prayer, and urges the necessity of constant, earnest prayer. The Holy Ghost comes upon a praying Church. The converts "continued" not only "in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship and the Breaking of the Bread" of the Eucharist, but also "in the prayers." In every age the holiest the most active, the most beneficent, of Christians have been pre-eminently people of prayer.

Prayer is difficult to define, for it is very varied in its method. Generally speaking it is the deliberate putting of ourselves in God's Presence, that we may receive what message He has to give us, may try to think His thoughts and purpose His will, may offer Him praise and thanks and may seek His grace and help for ourselves and others.

Prayer may be divided into Public and Private.

I. Public Prayer, in which we join at set times, particularly before the Altar, with our fellow-Christians, is more important than Private Prayer. We gain therein the help of their fellow-

ship and lend them the help of ours. A man cannot ordinarily be true to Christ if he does not regularly, certainly every Sunday, join in prayer in church with his brethren, nor can any amount of Private Prayer or listening to wireless services make up for his neglect. The greatest of all services of Public Prayer is the Lord's Own Service, the Mass, where, both in the *Act* of offering Jesus Crucified and in *word*, we come to God through the merits of our Redeemer. The revival of the Daily Mass is the most encouraging sign of recent years.

II. Private Prayer again may be divided into Vocal, in which we use words, and Mental, in which we reflect on Divine truth, God's love and mercy, His work in His saints, or simply remain very still in His Presence to hear what He will speak to us.

Vocal Prayer.—The Lord gave a model in what we call "The Lord's Prayer," on which I now give a few brief notes.

(I) "Our Father." We come as fellow-members of a Family to One Who stands to us in the relationship of perfect Father, Who has made us, purchased us, knows us through and through and all our circumstances, and Who can always help us.

(2) "Who art in heaven." Our home is there, and we lift our hearts homewards. It is home specially because Christ is there.

(3) "Hallowed be Thy Name." We desire that all men should know His character and render Him true worship, especially by joining in the Eucharistic Sacrifice of Praise.

(4) "Thy Kingdom come." We desire that all should become His avowed subjects, that the nations should all be brought into His Church, that His Royal Grace should operate in every heart, and that the Kingdom of His Glory should speedily be accomplished.

(5) "Thy will be done." We ask that absolute obedience should be yielded by all to His expressed will, that His will should be ours.

(6) "In earth as it is in heaven." The angels are our models in these three matters—in the perfection of their worship, the loyalty of their characters and the gladness of their obedience.

(7) "Give us this day our daily bread." We seek what we need for our bodies (the simplest supply is enough), and food for our souls, especially the Bread which is His Body—living care-free in His bounty from day to day.

(8) "And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive . . ." With hearts ready to pardon our

brethren who hurt us, we seek for pardon for our much more serious offences.

(9) "Lead us not into temptation." We *must* be tried and tested, but in humility we ask that we may not be called into too fierce trial.

(10) "Deliver us from evil." The spirit of evil would turn us away from God; we ask deliverance from his wiles.

Another devotion going back to the dawn of the Christian story is the little prayer, "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen." This weaves into one the address of St. Gabriel, the words of St. Elizabeth when "filled with the Holy Ghost," and the request for the help of Mary's prayers, as the purest of creatures, which was addressed to her from the first centuries by those taught by the Apostles. We need "the effectual, fervent prayer" of one so near and dear to Jesus.

Then the Creed, as a great act of faith, puts us in line and in company with the Church in all the world, and the "Glory be to the Father," etc., offers all praise to the Author of all good.

To be brief, this might be our rule for private prayer:

(1) Kneel down. Pause a moment to realize God. Make the sign of the Cross and say, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

(2) Say "Our Father," "Hail, Mary," the Apostles' Creed, and the "Glory be, etc."

(3) Reflect on the manner of passing the day, confess all sins, give thanks for all mercies, ask grace for coming duties and trials.

(4) Ask for blessing on the Church of God and the whole world; remember special causes and individuals, of which a written list should be carefully kept; pray for the faithful dead.

(5) Read, preferably kneeling, a few verses of Scripture, especially from the Gospels, ponder on them, wait a few moments for a message from God, and then carry away into the daily round the peace of God. (This is one kind of Mental Prayer.)

It is a good practice to make a special prayer as near noon as possible every day: the Angelus should be used then, as well as morning and evening. And often during the day say some ejaculatory prayer like, "Lord, help me," or "Glory be to God," or "Lord, show me the way,"

or "Lord, have mercy on them." In general, we ought to try to live our lives as in the Presence of God, a part result of which will be to save us from forgetfulness, sloth, pride, hardness, despondency.

Prayer is no substitute for action, but neither is action a substitute for prayer. The two must be woven together in the one life, but prayer supplies and provides the true motive for action, *without* which our conduct tends to become more and more fretful, moody and spasmodic, *with* which our characters grow daily more into the likeness of Christ and our actions a less imperfect imitation of His.

So let a rule be formed: Every Sunday and as often during the week as I can "I will take the cup of Salvation and will call upon the name of the Lord" by my presence at Mass; morning, noon and night I will come in definite prayer to Him; carefully I shall prepare and carefully give thanks for Holy Communion; I will try, as far as my frailty permits, to live as in God's Presence all the day; and at last I trust that with words of prayer on my lips, prayers of others seen and unseen round my bed, and God's love in my heart, I may pass from this world to stand before His Judgment Seat.

XI

THE RULE OF CONDUCT

HERE are some leading thoughts about the Rule of Conduct, taking the Ten Commandments interpreted in a Christian sense as guide. These Commandments, come down from a hoary antiquity, were a continual safeguard to Israel, and grew in depth of meaning for pious Jews. Our Lord threw a whole world of new light on their inner sense, as is evident in the Sermon on the Mount, and it is in this light we accept them. We are accustomed to divide them into two sections, the first four telling us our duty to God (to love Him with all our hearts, etc.), and the remaining six setting forth our duty to our neighbour (to love him as ourselves). The leading theme in the first four is Worship, and in the remainder Service.

I. *Worship*. Man is made first and foremost to worship his Creator; it is his highest function, his greatest honour, his primary duty. Each of the first four Commandments tells us something about this Worship. (1) The first Commandment says that God is to be worshipped by all, and

that nothing on earth must interfere with our religious duties. No excuse about want of time, inconvenience, other duties, etc., avails us. If we love God truly, we must worship Him in the company of our brothers and sisters. We are unnatural children if we neglect worship; we virtually set up our "other gods" as of more importance. (2) The second Commandment deals with the outward expression of worship. It was never wrong to make an image with the intention of using it to help man to worship God better. When we prepare for a feast we make use of flowers and decorations, we put on festive attire, to suggest gaiety. We decorate our churches and altars to suggest holiness and happy love. The world uses pictures, perfumes, postures, to lure men and women into vice. God claims them to be used in such a way as to suggest His love, His claims, His promises. So we see in a well-appointed church crucifixes, a likeness of the Blessed Virgin and her Holy Child, pictures, flowers, bright vestment and hangings, a dignified altar, well-chased holy vessels; often we are greeted by the perfume of incense; we use bodily gestures—the bow to the altar, the genuflexion (bending of the knee) before Our Lord in His Sacrament, kneeling, making the sign of the

cross, bowing at the Name of Jesus, etc.—all this that the body may take its proper share in worship and enable the soul to fulfil its part. Of course, first and foremost all these are dedicated to God's service. E.g., incense is not offered to the people, but is a symbolic offering to God denoting the ascending of our prayers and sacrifices, just as it did in the Jewish Temple when Our Lord was present there. (3) The third Commandment teaches the duty of worshipping God with our souls, being really sincere, reverent and earnest in what we do and say, making our vows and keeping them, and obviously it precludes all jesting or speaking lightly of holy places, persons and ceremonies. (4) The fourth Commandment, besides claiming every day for God's service, sets forth the duty of special times for worship, particularly claiming every Sunday and "day of obligation" (generally recognized as Christmas, the Circumcision of Our Lord, the Epiphany, Good Friday, Ascension Day, Corpus Christi, the Feasts of St. Peter and St. Paul, the Assumption of the B.V.M. and All Saints). On these days we are bound, if we would follow the example and rule of the ancient Church, to be present at the Lord's Own Service, "commonly called the Mass," and to give some time to

special meditation. Sundays should be kept free from unnecessary business, and should be specially marked by good works.

So we sum up these four commandments by saying, God is to be worshipped in company by His faithful people, with body and soul, at the times and in the services He has appointed.

II. *Service.* (1) The fifth Commandment tells of the exercise of true religion in the home and in all social and industrial life, by mutual respect, courtesy, love and consideration. Everyone must prove himself a true Christian in his own home and common environment.

(2) The sixth Commandment teaches the duty of love in action, promoting our neighbour's welfare and happiness, and excludes all malice, hatred, revenge, jealousy, sulkiness and spite. It sets a special value on the gift and opportunity of human life, and forbids any practice that might shorten, impair or hinder it.

(3) The seventh Commandment sets God's seal on the sanctity and permanence of Christian Marriage, urges to careful discipline of the body and its natural desires, reminds of the peculiar regard we should have for our own and others' bodies as being members of Christ's Body, and forbids all secret or open vicious living, all per-

version of relations between men and women, all immodesty or impurity in any form, and all selfish indulgence, ostentation and vanity.

(4) The eighth Commandment inculcates absolute honesty in all our doings, honest work and honest pay, generosity in the use of our means, paying to God His due in systematic almsgiving, and condemns the spirit that would seek to get the better of a brother or to get something for nothing. If wrong has been done, restitution must if possible be made.

(5) The ninth Commandment sets before us the ideal of the grace of kindly speech and of seeking the best to say of our neighbour; it urges us to a careful regard for truth, forbids telling others anything that might hurt our neighbour, even if it is true, and condemns absolutely all slander or mischievous gossip. Christ is God's Word to us, and He is the Truth.

(6) The tenth Commandment urges to the spirit of contentment and thankfulness, and condemns all feeling or expression of grudging, envy or pride.

* * * * *

This seems the place to enumerate what have come to be known as "the Precepts of the Church," which come to us as God's Com-

mandments authorized by the general tradition of the Catholic Church. They are:

- (1) To be present at Mass on all Sundays and "days of obligation."
- (2) To keep the days of fasting (all Fridays, Vigils of certain Feasts, at least Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent, etc.).
- (3) To go to Confession *at least* once a year (with the implication that earnest Christians will go much oftener, and always when guilty of serious sins of thought, word or deed).
- (4) To receive Holy Communion worthily, especially at Easter (with the implication of *frequent* reception by the really sincere).
- (5) To contribute systematically to the support of the work and worship of the Church at home and abroad.
- (6) To observe the Church's regulations concerning Marriage (e.g. to avoid the forbidden degrees of kindred, times, etc.).

I commend these brief notes on conduct to the careful and prayerful consideration of all my readers. We must never forget that it is true Christian conduct which best commends to the world true Christian belief. We are Christ's witnesses not less in our daily manner of life than in our hours of public worship.

XII

A SUGGESTED RULE OF LIFE

I PROMISE by God's help—

1. To begin each day with the prayer:

My God, I offer Thee to-day
All that I think or do or say.

2. To say my prayers every morning and night and if possible at midday.

3. To read a portion of the Holy Scriptures daily and think over it.

4. To be present at Mass every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation unless prevented by illness or absolutely necessary duty.

5. To receive Holy Communion at least—
(Daily? Twice a week? Once a week? Or—).

6. To prepare carefully each time for Holy Communion and to give due thanks.

7. To go to Confession at least every year before Easter, each time I am conscious of serious sin, and, to prevent carelessness, stimulate contrition and win grace to amend, I will go (once a week? once a month? four times a year?).

8. To keep as well as I can the days of fasting or abstinence.

9. To give systematically for the upkeep of the Church's work at home and overseas.

10. To help in Church work by prayer and special service open to me.

11. To promote reverence, purity, temperance, just dealing, peace and goodwill.

Signed

Witnessed by, Priest.

NOTE.—This rule should be renewed, and, if advisable, revised every year.

XIII

SOME SHORT EPISTLES

A. A CALL TO WORSHIP

1. "I write unto you men." Every day I meet crowds of you going to and coming from your work, many going smiling to hard and often not very pleasant tasks and returning cheerily to wife and family, some grimly going and coming, resolved to "stick it." You have high courage and would go out of your way to help a pal. In your heart, deep down, you are convinced that a pure and chivalrous life is the best. But what of the lifting up of all your lives to God? What of the highest duty of one made in the Divine image and redeemed by a Saviour's Blood? What of the duty and privilege of heartening all your fellows by assembling with them in God's House for God's Own Service? The Best Workman that ever toiled with earthly tools, the Best Pal ever man can have, the manliest Man that ever faced hardship and difficulty, the greatest Hero that ever endured persecution and death in the noblest cause, the God-made-Man, Who

offered a sacrifice so big we cannot understand it, calls you, asks your support, your backing, your loyalty. Leaving out weekdays meantime, every Sunday He provides for you in the Holy Eucharist the manliest of all services, His very Own, the presentation, in a manner as full of mystery as of love, of His Death on Calvary. It concerns you very nearly, my brothers, for our only hope of pardon and life is through that Death pleaded continually by Him in heaven and by us at the earthly altar. From that altar He supplies you with the very Bread of Life to give you strength and courage; it is the Bread for heroes, for true men. For some of you to come regularly will mean real sacrifice. You have to rise early on weekdays. You will need to rearrange your household plans. You will need to alter your idea that the evening is a good enough time to worship God. As Man to men, as Saviour to friend, as Lord to followers, Jesus calls you to prove and renew your manhood by constant Sunday morning attendance at the altar. That will inspire all the rest of your life. Now, what are you going to do about it? Jesus needs you and has a right to your services.

2. "I write unto you, young men." Jesus was a Young Man; He is still a Young Man, in all

the joy and eagerness of an unquenchable hope, full of enthusiasm, full of faith in the best in man as moulded and kindled by Divine grace. This Young Man wants you every one. The foolish world around encourages you to think that your emancipation comes when you give up "going to Church." Our Lord teaches you that such conduct is to take the way of the coward, is to make yourself a slave to the easy conventions of the ungodly. It is GOING BACK ON JESUS. He does not want to put an old head on you or a jaded heart in you. He loves your quick wit and ready jest and manifold adaptability. He loves your eager hearts and warm affections. He rejoices in the pure deep love of man for maid. He loves the challenging of impossible successes. But most He loves your loyal adherence to your young ideals of holiness and sacrifice, somehow caught as by a kind of beneficial infection when the story of His Cross and Passion first captured your imagination and your heart. "Stand fast, sons of Mine," He says to you. Keep your hearts clean and your sight undimmed by gazing on Him. Unite your young heart's desire with His Heart's Desire as Sunday by Sunday He lifts it all up in the Sacrifice of the altar. Not one Sunday must you fail Him if you would keep your

manhood and preserve your life unspoiled, if you would give Him that loyalty He well deserves of you. Come then, and in regular communion every Lord's Day and in pleading His merits in the Eucharist grow into the perfection of being "His Parfait Knight."

3. "I write unto you women." His Mother was a woman, model of all pure and noble womanhood. She could tell you better than any other what it is worth to stand by Jesus—yes, even to stand by His Cross. It cost her more than any other to keep near Him. With her were joined always, and specially round the Cross, those other faithful hearts who feared less the scorn of the world than the self-scorn of proving traitors to their Master. The future of the nation is in your hands, in your children, born and unborn. Jesus needs the entire consecration of your womanhood. You have many duties. It is very difficult to keep up your communions and attendance at the Eucharist. It is, alas, fatally easy to slip out of these duties altogether, and without any badly wounded conscience, too. But others have proved, are proving, it possible to be regular communicants, at a sacrifice. It is worth it. The holy women round Calvary, the Blessed Mother, your sympathizing friend, made a big

sacrifice to be there. Jesus needs you, mothers and big sisters and aunts and guardians. The heavy burden in the home will be lighter, the influence you exert will be holier, if you resolve to do your best to come regularly unto the altar of God, to commend your dear charges and yourselves to the God of mercy as the Sacrifice is lifted and to feed on Him Who can indeed refresh you.

4. "I write unto you maidens." Jesus was born of a holy Maid, a maid still in virgin purity of heart. She drew from her Son all her virgin-heartedness, all her deep devotion, all her perfect trust in God. To you, largely, it belongs to establish and maintain high ideals of pure and noble living. Round you on all sides are the lures of vice and the calls to make yourselves cheap. You cannot do your part by maintaining merely a cold austerity or a lofty disgust. The springs of charity and purity combined are found in Jesus' Heart, and Jesus' Heart beats warmly in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar. So for you as for the others, the central call is from the Holy Eucharist. There Flesh and Blood are consecrated, lifted up in holy worship, given generously as the food of virtuous living. Come, my daughters, gather round Him Who loves each of

you supremely as though there were none other to love. Never fail Him at the tryst where in the lowliness but infinite passion of a Sacrament He awaits you every Sunday morning.

5. "I write unto you children." Once He said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." And still He says to you, dear children, "I want you. I am lonely if I must look down from the altar and see vacant places where I ought to see rows and rows of happy little faces, if I do not hear your child voices mingling with the fuller tones of your elders in creed and hymns and responses." Yes, Jesus wants you, children, every one of you, long before you can understand it all. Dear children, I do not understand the half of it, but I know it all means love. God loves me and I want to love God. You do, my child, do you not? Well, come and tell Him so every Sunday. You bring Him a present every time, for you come to offer His Son under the forms of Bread and Wine: He will accept Jesus crucified for us, and with Jesus our own hearts which we offer with Him. Now, do not disappoint dear Jesus, and do not rob Our Heavenly Father of the Sacrifice of praise which we all owe to Him.

B. THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT AND THE CHURCH EXPECTANT

Two years ago I was catechizing some children, and asked them what everybody thought of when November came round: the surprising answer was "The Plot"! I expected some suggestion of dark days, fallen leaves, the last glory of autumn's garment in the woods, and possibly something about the blessed saints or faithful departed.

A man is known by the company he keeps, and he is likely to catch the spirit of those nearest him. From the bare point of view of spiritual growth then, it would seem advisable to keep well the Festival and Octave of All Saints (November 1st to 8th).

Of recent years we have quite happily in the Church of England recovered at least a part of the primitive belief in the communion of saints. We do not listen to the silly old tag about "no intermediaries between God and man." We know that God mediates to us countless blessings of His love and care through many earthly friends, and we look on the saints as living a vigorous loving life in the Body of Christ, praying continually for us and longing for our fellowship. Wireless brings us into immediate touch with

New York or Melbourne: prayer brings us into immediate contact with the inhabitants of heaven. The Mother of Jesus is our true Mother, and will not deny our requests for her prayers. St. Peter is still the Prince of the Apostles and will not fail us if we ask him to intercede, nor will St. George, or St. Wilfrid, or St. Paulinus, or our patron saint, or any of the glorious company. Only a few of their names are in our Kalendars to be commemorated on special days; but we celebrate the whole splendid company every time we call upon the angels and archangels and *all the company of heaven* to join us in our song of praise, and we keep a special day in their honour every year as All Saints' Day comes round. To have the saints much in our hearts and minds, to honour them, to call upon them by name, sure of their friendly aid, is to put ourselves in an environment in which we may unconsciously learn many secrets of sanctity and comfort. Those around us on earth have much of their interest and energy absorbed in the many petty or material concerns of this passing state, but the saints in glory are wholly occupied with the things of eternity, the glory of God and His Kingdom. So they will by their holy fellowship lift up our hearts and minds, and save us

from many discouragements and disappointments attaching of necessity to every merely earthly pursuit. Let us avail ourselves to the utmost of the opportunity of each All-Hallows-tide that we may cease to reckon our values in terms of this world's "brass" and learn to esteem more highly heavenly treasure.

Immediately after the All Saints' Commemoration comes our observance of All Souls' Day (November 2nd), one of the greatest opportunities of true Christian charity and kindness to the dead ever devised under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. There is perhaps little need nowadays to argue about prayers for the dead. I think that probably every living mourner prays for his dead somehow or other. The Church has shown us the highest and best way, in the remembrance made of them at Mass. Sometimes we feel our hearts filled with pity for those who live lonely lives and die lonely deaths. They go forth from this world, let us suppose, facing Godwards, but still very unprepared for the worship and service of heaven. They need cleansing, light, love. As our prayers help them here, so they can beyond the grave. We have no reason to suppose, rather every reason to disbelieve, that the mere experience of dying can

change a poor weak sinner (and that's what most of us will be at our death) into a perfect saint of God. It is not so that God works, but by degrees and in accordance with our natures. So, for our own dear departed ones, and for the great multitude of the lonely dead, we offer a special effort of prayer and sacrifice on All Souls' Day, very often during November (the special "Month of the Dead"), at many a Requiem throughout the year, and indeed every time the Holy Sacrifice is lifted up. Be kind to the dead.

C. THE CHURCH MILITANT

The other day I had a letter from a friend of many years' standing in which occurred the words, "Is there good progress? I hope and pray so." Well, it cannot be said that we are galloping, perhaps not even walking, but I think we are at least crawling. Someone has put it like this, "If you cannot mount the hill of holiness in seven-leagued boots, for heaven's sake shuffle up in slippers." I cannot say I like the introduction of the word "slippers," for it suggests the fire-side and many lazy excuses, but the general idea is good. But if we are to keep on crawling or "shuffling up," there are some matters that need

careful attention. First, what are we out for? Surely not simply "to be good, to lead a decent life, to be kind." I do not want you to aim at being bad, or indecent or unkind; but we want something at once higher and more definite. We are out for building up the Kingdom of Christ in this world, and, personally, we must aim at holiness. Imagine the cheek of it, aiming at being a saint! Yet Our Lord will accept no lower aim: "Be ye holy as I am holy." Now no man can grow holy by nature any more than he can without special means grow into a knowledge of mathematics or Latin. Only by God's special grace "preventing and following" him, and only by abundant and regular use of the means of grace afforded him in God's Church, can a man grow holy.

I find a widely spread notion that there are in existence a great number of religious bodies and that it is a matter of indifference which you "patronize." Many keep on saying empty things like this: "We all worship the one God," "We are all making for the same place." Now I challenge all this, every word of it—"All." Very few seem to have any definite idea of any special duty of worship and very many seem perfectly content to go on through life without any real

worship at all. "Worship"—the common idea is of singing a few hymns to a few well-known tunes, with a few prayers and (if possible) a "good sermon," and it is quite optional for a man to attend or not. The standard is "What I like," the call is "If I feel inclined."

"The same God"—"There are gods many and lords many." The vaguest, wildest and most misleading ideas of God are prevalent—a Being to be called in when we fail to obtain satisfaction from other sources—a Being Who is very indulgent and is not greatly concerned about trifling sins—a Being Who wants us to enjoy ourselves.

"We are all making for the same place"—and there is pictured a "place" to which an incongruous crowd of people, good and bad, are wafted in by a kind of magic to sit on rather uncomfortable seats of gold and occupy themselves more, or probably less, comfortably with harps, likely as not held wrong end up and not unlikely to cause a good deal of pain to the heavenly conductor, who, it is hoped, will have more patience than the average earthly conductor. These folk will not believe that heaven is not a place at all and that skill in harp playing will not by some be acquired to all eternity.

Let us get down to the foundations. God made me for His own glory, that in me He should see the reflection of His own perfection. I find in myself a great weakness and a great unlikeness to God. Yet at my best I have at least a vague longing to be more worthy, not to gain some outward reward, but to be "changed in nature." God the Son came to this world and became Incarnate, that is, took flesh and a human nature, lived here a perfect life, showed in Himself at once what God is like and what God would have me to become. On the Cross Jesus made a perfect offering of Himself, a Sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, yielding all to the Father. On the third day God showed His acceptance of the Sacrifice by the raising of Jesus from the dead, never more to die, and Jesus carried our nature to its proper home, with God. Presently He sent down His own Holy Spirit of love and power upon the little infant society, making it the Holy Catholic Church, with a command that all men should be brought into this fellowship. I cannot be in a safe or spiritually healthy condition outside this society: it is part of man's nature to live and grow in a society. As the child is born into a family and develops there his personality, so I must be born again in Baptism

into this Divine Society, the Church, and find in its companionship and service, at its Table and by its medicines, my means of developing into being a true child of God. My earthly family is known by certain marks, so that I describe myself as of the Jones family or the Brown family. The family of the Holy Catholic Church has also its marks by which it may be recognized. It must have as its One Head, Jesus Christ, Who shares His life with the members, as an earthly father imparts of his life to his children. It must hold the family traditions, the Catholic Creed, expressed at its best in the Nicene Creed, which we say every Sunday morning. It must offer the Catholic Worship, variously called the Lord's Service, the Holy Communion, the Holy Eucharist (or "Thanksgiving"), the Divine Liturgy, the Holy Mass, etc.: this Service or Sacrifice was appointed by Jesus Christ Himself and is rightly regarded as of Divine obligation, that is, our "bounden duty and service" at least on every Sunday. The Society must have the Catholic Ministry, not simply good men chosen to lead the congregation, but a priesthood to act for Christ and commissioned with grace through the laying on of the hands of a Bishop in the direct line of the Apostles. The character of the

priest does not affect the blessings conveyed through his ministry, for these are from God. The Society must administer the Catholic Sacraments, namely, the two great sacraments, sometimes called the Sacraments of the Gospel, and these other five rites commonly called Sacraments, Confirmation, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Matrimony and Holy Orders (or Ordination). Lastly, the Society must manifest at least to some degree the Catholic life, the fruits of holiness and good works. In England, by God's Providence, we find the Church of England representing through the centuries this Society and to her we owe a duty of great loyalty, as in her we trust to find our salvation.

Now I want to emphasize a little this duty: *Loyalty* will mean (1) that we shall not forsake the worship of our Church for that of any other body of Christians, no matter how good or righteous they may be; (2) that we shall join regularly, at least every Sunday, in her chief service, the Lord's Own Service, the Holy Eucharist; (3) that we shall bring our children to that service and send them to the Church Sunday School *and to no other*; (4) that we shall contribute generously for the upkeep of her worship and activities at home and abroad; (5)

that we shall try to live in this Family as fellow-members, loving and helping one another; (6) that we shall be ready and eager to bring others into this ancient Fold of Christ; (7) that we shall be eager to be instructed in the faith and discipline of the Church.

Then we shall strive to find our salvation in the Church by making free use of the means of grace afforded to us. A priest friend said to me the other day, "The last person in the world whose service my people desire is a Catholic priest." The Church of England priest is a Catholic priest by every test, and is among his people first and foremost to lead them to use the sacraments, not to be "such a nice man," "so agreeable," "a real good sort," "a true sport." So the member of the family will make sure that he is duly prepared for Confirmation; of old times the baptized were called "half-baptized" till they received Confirmation. He will, again and again, when conscious of grievous sins in his life (and who is not?) come to Church and confess his sins with true manhood and true humility that he may obtain, through God's priest, God's pardon and help to do better in Absolution. He will be a very frequent communicant, if possible at least every Sunday

receiving the Body and Blood of Christ. He will be diligent in prayer and Gospel reading. He will have a definite rule about these to prevent his growing slack—e.g. weekly Communion, monthly (or more frequent) Confession, daily morning and evening prayer, a definite proportion of income for alms, etc.

“One last word”—about the spirit of service. There are lots of jobs about every Church and in every congregation. It is up to each of us to find our job and to do it heartily as unto the Lord, for Christ’s sake. The petted helper, who sulks if he is criticized, who needs continual flattery (which he should not get) or gingering, is a curse. Many congregations have been ruined by flattery, though the genuine worker despises it. “Do it unto the Lord” or—quit. The whole flattery stunt is wrapped up with wrong ideas of God: it logically involves adoration of a Divine Jellyfish: it would substitute for the Cross in the midst a Pot of Honey with a Big Ladle.

D. WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

The central opportunity for building up the true Christ life is provided at the altar; careful preparation by prayer, Scripture study, self-

examination, contrition and confession, will discipline us; the most comfortable Sacrament of Our Lord's Body and Blood will convey to us the very life of Christ; and in our daily walk and conversation we are called to translate into thought, word and action the gifts that have been supernaturally bestowed upon us. We are set in a fourfold environment. First there comes the family where we are called to strengthen one another's faith, hope and love by cheerful companionship and mutual consideration and service, the Holy Family of Nazareth being our model. Often there will be implied real missionary work of parents to children and spouse to spouse, for, as St. Paul teaches, the believing partner may win the doubtful or unbelieving.

Secondly, there is the family of the parish and congregation, for each congregation is meant to be a real family circle with the parish priest as a true father-in-God and the people filled with the spirit of true brotherhood. The Common Holy Table of the Lord will be the great rallying-place, and no communicant should rest satisfied till all around have taken their places there; the word of invitation and encouragement should often be on our lips, not so much "Come and we shall do you good," as "Come, for we have need of you."

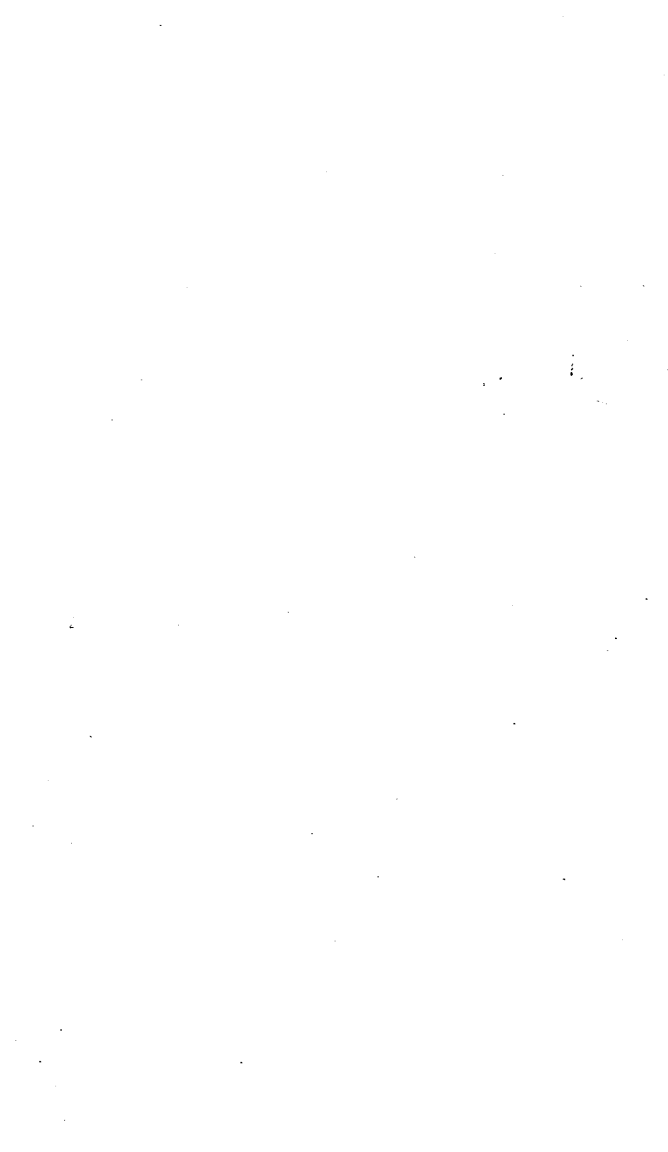
Thirdly, there is the environment of our country, to win which for the Kingdom of Christ in all its industrial, social, literary and educational life should be our hearts' desire and constant endeavour; this we believe to be the prime call on Christ's Catholic Church.

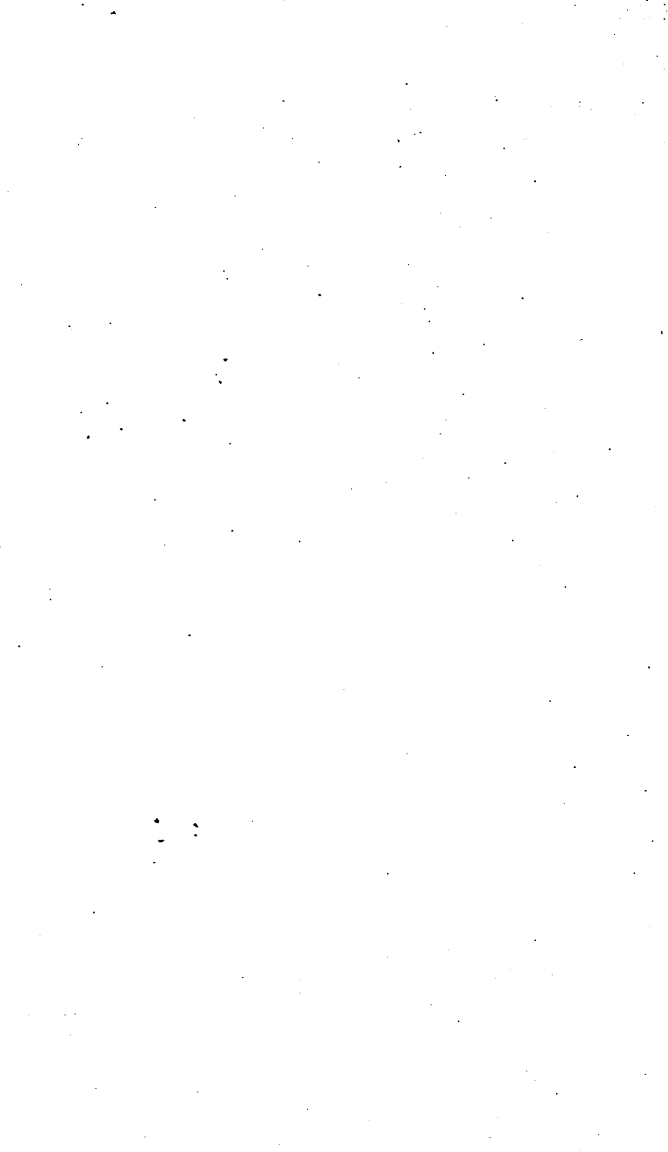
Lastly, there is the environment of the world, not now such a very large place. It is thronged by races made in God's likeness, but, alas, yet largely ignorant of their Saviour and always threatened, as we also are, with disaster while the holy constraints of Christianity are unrecognized. Let us keep this vision steadily before us and never imagine that our Christian duty is performed by the perfunctory discharge of a few pious customs. To save the world Our Lord had to make a complete sacrifice of Himself, and we can fulfil our part by nothing less than the entire and ungrudging oblation of ourselves and our substance for His glory.

Let us, therefore, throw ourselves more wholeheartedly into our Church life, as the very centre and inspiration of all our activities, giving our very best, putting away every vestige of the spirit of suspicion, or animosity, or prejudice, or meanness. The great Heart of Jesus asks for largeheartedness from all of us; do not let us disappoint Him.



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